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ABSTRACT

A selection of papers from the 1987 meeting of the applied linguistics association includes the following: "Applied Linguistics in Society" (John Trim); "European Developments in Applied Linguistics" (Theo van Els); "Translation and Interpretation: Retrospect and Prospect" (Peter Newmark); "Clinical Linguistics: Retrospect and Prospect" (Pamela Grunwell); "Some Pawns for Kingman: Language Education and English Teaching" (Ronald Carter); "The Language of the Bilingual Medical Consultation" (Brian Harrison, Arvind Bhatt, James Carey, Philip Ebden); "Learner Diaries: Possibilities and Pitfalls" (Christina Howell-Richardson, Brian Parkinson); "Vocabulary Size as a Placement Indicator" (Paul Meara, Glyn Jones); "Are You Decoding Me? The Assessment of Understanding in Oral Interaction" (Jill Schrafnagl, Duncan Cameron); "Comments in Academic Articles" (John Skelton). (MSE)

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British Studies in Applied Linguistics 3

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BAAL

APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN SOCIETY

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BRITISH STUDIES IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS 3

APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN SOCIETY

Papers from the Twentieth Anniversary Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics

held at the University of Nottingham
September 1987

Edited by Pamela Grunwell

1988
Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
for
British Association for Applied Linguistics

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INTRODUCTION

Just over twenty years ago BAAL came into existence. Over these past two decades the Association has sought to realise the objects expressed in its Constitution : "the advancement of education by fostering and promoting, by any lawful charitable means, the study of language use, language acquisition and language teaching, and the fostering of inter-disciplinary collaboration in this study....." In more recent years the Association's publicity brochure has elaborated upon this constitutional undertaking by listing under the aim "to promote the study of language in use" the inclusion of the following topics : language acquisition, language teaching, language disabilities, language varieties, language in literature, language policies, language in social services, translation and interpretation .... and by adding the objective : "to provide a common forum for those engaged in the theoretical study of language and for those whose interest is in the practical implications of such work".

BAAL's Twentieth Annual Meeting at Nottingham University in September 1987 provided an anniversary occasion to review what has been achieved in realising our founders' vision of the Association's *raison d'etre*. The theme for the meeting **Applied Linguistics in Society** is arguably all-embracing since all dimensions of applied linguistic endeavour have some social relevance. Indeed perusing the whole programme for the meeting it is difficult to identify which papers were intended specifically to address the theme. This collection of published papers is therefore representative of the range presented there rather than having been selected to focus upon a specific theme.

The first four contributions are edited versions of papers presented by speakers invited to provide a retrospective and prospective review of specific dimensions of applied linguistics. It is probably no coincidence that the topic of educational policies and practices in applied linguistics as well as the development of the specific branches of applied linguistics themselves is a particular issue brought up in all these papers. They collectively reaffirm the appropriateness of the Association's objects not only retrospectively but also as we move forward into the last decade of the twentieth century.

The six other papers in this collection are also forward-looking and reflect themes that recur in BAAL's twenty-year old history. Carter dwells upon the old and new issues in mother tongue English language teaching and language in literature. Harrison and colleagues illustrate the need for caution (and training) in the use of interpreters in our increasingly multi-lingual society. The next three papers air issues in the area of foreign/second language teaching, which traditionally and to the present is the majority interest of the members of the Association. Interestingly, all three papers discuss aspects and methodologies of assessment of learning achieved rather than principles and procedures of teaching methodology, through the latter is considered in Howell-Richardson and Parkinson's paper. Finally, Skelton provides an example of the study of language in use and how this has practical implications both for those who use language and those who seek to teach others to use it.

Collectively, these ten papers convincingly demonstrate that BAAL, in the persons of its members, is equipped with skills and aspirations to continue to develop applied linguistics in the service of society.

Pamela Grunwell
Leicester Polytechnic School of Speech Pathology
May 1988

APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN SOCIETY

John Trim
Chairperson, British Association for Applied Linguistics

The 1987 Annual Meeting marked the twentieth anniversary of the founding of our Association. It may be of interest to members who had not yet become involved in applied linguistics at that time, to recall the event and its background. That background, of course, stretches back to remote antiquity. So far as we know, the first attempts to look at language in a systematic way must have been associated with the first development of writing systems - and without writing systems, we have little access to the thoughts of our ancestors and predecessors. By definition, we pass from history into prehistory, left to gather what clues we can from the other artefacts that have survived. In that sense, an extraordinary achievement of applied linguistics is the beginning of human history. The interest in the work of the First (Icelandic) Grammarian has been in the insight it provides, exceptionally, into the reasoning that is involved in the adaptation of an alphabet in use to represent one language to meet the requirements of a hitherto unwritten language. American structuralists were impressed, even amazed, to find that reasoning very close to their own phonological, or phonemic, thinking.

The abiding work of antiquity in the codification of the classical languages was stimulated, as R H Robins has pointed out, less by scholarly enquiry than by the need to teach first Greek, then Latin, to foreigners. Hellenistic philology arose from the need of Alexandrian librarians to preserve the legacy of a Golden Age already passing away from the corruption inherent in the copying of manuscripts. Robins has pointed out, however, that the *Techne Grammatike* of Dionysios Thrax was criticised by contemporary philosophers as lowering the status of the study of language from *episteme* to *techne*, replacing attempts to understand the nature of language by mere technical descriptions of its mechanisms. Quintillian's great work on the Institutions of Oratory was conceived for practical purposes, and even starts off with some down-to-earth advice to Roman families to ensure bilingual facility for their children by having them brought up by a Greek nurse - they will, after all, be sure to pick up the Latin which is spoken all around them. We know of the political motives underlying the projects of medieval emperors, kings and bishops for grammars of vernacular languages and the creation of linguistic academies in the post-renaissance period, not to mention the interest of the Reformation in the use of linguistic expertise in promoting broader literacy to bring the newly-translated Bible to the central position in the lives of ordinary people, which lay at the heart of that movement.

The close interrelation of the scholarly study of language and practical concern with language in society is, then, by no means new. Throughout history, the most productive periods have been those in which theory and practice, pure science and applied science, the energetic tacklings of practical problems and serious enquiry into the nature of the world have proceeded together in partnership.

It was, however, in the nineteenth century that this partnership became fully conscious, at first in the area of phonetics. The development of phonetics in Britain came to a large extent out of the work of Ellis and Bell on the teaching of the deaf, and played a significant part in the invention of the telephone. The extraordinary flowering of phonetics in Leipzig in the 1850s seems to have resulted from the coincidence of medical, musical and philological interests. The result was the neogrammarian revolution in linguistics, turning the direction of study away from the reconstruction of linguistic prehistory to the study of the contemporary spoken language and the attested processes of language change. Many of the neogrammarian scholars became actively involved in the reform of language teaching in schools, both of the mother tongue and of foreign languages. The International Phonetics Association grew out of the Phonetic Teachers Association and its journal, *Le Maître Phonétique (mf)* retained a "section des eleves", consisting of phonetically transcribed text ostensibly for use with pupils in language classes right up to its recent demise. Wilhelm Vietor, perhaps best remembered now for his pamphlet "Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren", was active up till the first world war with Passy, Jespersen, Klinghardt and others in the movement to reform modern language teaching.

In the inter-war period, Daniel Jones' Department of Phonetics at Univerisity College London was almost exclusively concerned with the teaching of pronunciation, succeeding for a short period in introducing a phonetic method into the general teaching of modern foreign languages in British schools and also providing a phonetic training for many teachers of English as a mother-tongue. The courses held at University College in the phonetics of English for foreign teachers of English, with their clear-cut methodology, were enormously influential and Jones' *Outline of English Phonetics* and his *English Pronouncing Dictionary* were regarded as carrying ultimate authority. Jones also instituted a lectureship in the grammar of spoken English, held with distinction by H.E.Palmer and later, though with less enthusiasm, by J.R.Firth. In his pre-war departmental brochure, Jones explicitly recognised the teaching of English as a foreign language as a legitimate field for post-graduate research. He was also active in devising orthographies for hitherto unwritten colonial languages, based on the phoneme principle. For a full generation, this concept of the "phoneme" dominated linguistic theory and, by extension to other levels of linguistic organisation, provided the basic model according to which structuralism analysed language and flourished, particularly in the United States, until the day came when it could find no effective response to the theoretical onslaught of

Chomsky and his followers.

The generalisation of the "emic" principle in the United States was largely attributable to Bloomfield and his successors, particularly Pike, Bloch and Hockett. Bloomfield was essentially a neogrammarian, with a late, scarcely assimilated conversion to Watsonian behaviourism. His textbook *Language* (1935) remained the standard text until about 1960. Bloomfield also concerned himself with the application of linguistics in the educational field. Together with his pupil and collaborator, the eminent lexicographer, Clarence Barnhart, he devised a method of teaching reading, *Let's read.* Based on his dictum that writing is not language but simply its archaeology, a mere secondary representation, Bloomfield considered that learning to read contained no component of language learning. He had no truck with centres of interest, vocabulary development and the like, ruthlessly subordinating everything to the sorting of lexical material so as to present the phoneme/grapheme correspondence as being as straightforward as possible, until the learner has grasped the fundamental analytical principle involved. Dealing with the notorious anomalies in English spelling was, in his view, a relatively trivial matter. Having some sympathy with this point of view, my wife and I used the method with our children. It proved highly successful and yet self-defeating. Our children rapidly grasped the phonemic principle embodied in the alphabet. Having done so, they proceeded to read books for pleasure and had no further interest in the reader. Perhaps that is a confirmation of Bloomfield's view!

However, it is for the application of structuralist and behaviourist principles to the teaching of foreign languages during the Second World War and then under the provisions of the National Defence Education Act in the post-war period that the contributions of the Bloomfieldians to applied linguistics are probably best known. I imagine that many of our language laboratories are still dependent on Audio-Lingual Materials for their coverage of many languages. I do not think that the Broomfieldians ever held the view frequently ascribed to them, that learning a language was simply a matter of habit-formation. Their psycholinguistic basis was rather that the higher functions involved in the formulation and understanding of speech can only operate properly if the lower level mechanisms become automatised and removed from consciousness. This is not, of course, a view confined to behaviourist linguists. "Clumping" is a concept which appeals to common sense. I recall that all the various manuals of military training during my service with the infantry began: "The aim of all weapon training is to teach the recruit so to handle his weapon that his actions become instinctive and all thoughts may be concentrated on how best to kill the enemy" (I trust that by recalling this model specification of objectives I have not rendered myself and my publisher liable for prosecution under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act).

Mastering a foreign language, alas, is rather more complex than loading and firing a Bren gun and dealing with its stoppages, as when "Gun fires one or two rounds and stops - AGAIN!" Phonology and morphology, dealing with relatively small closed sets, respond well to techniques of habit formation, as they also generally confirm the predictions of interference theory, the most characteristic contribution of structuralist theory to applied linguistics. So do the short holistic phrases which make up much of transactional language and the routine aspects of everyday interactions; the learning of which has largely replaced the learning of grammatical structures in the name of communication. Syntax is quite a different matter. The spontaneous formulation of thought and the way in which the listener constructs meaning on the basis of another person's speech cannot be accounted for in simple terms as choices from pre-established repertories or combinations of pre-formed modules. Chomsky's renowned review of Skinner's *Verbal Behaviour* was immediately decisive.

Unfortunately, Chomskyan linguistics, in the 30 years since that review, appears to have contributed little or nothing to the development of applied linguistics, that is to say, to our empirical understanding of the workings of language in the individual and society, and the application of that knowledge, in an interdisciplinary framework, to the treatment of problems of language acquisition, learning and use. Indeed, Chomsky foresaw clearly that this would be the case. The distinction of 'competence' and 'performance', initially helpful in creating space for an autonomous linguistics could be - and has been used to insulate linguistics from empirical accountability. As the early excitement of psychologists over its apparent implications for child language acquisition has faded, it seems probable that mainstream linguistics has never been so academically encapsulated, with so little interest in its social consequences and having so little to contribute to the understanding and solution of the many urgent language problems with which society and the individuals which compose it find themselves faced, at a time when communication, still predominantly through the medium of natural language, is becoming more complex, more problematic, more central to organised society. It is surely a cause for great regret and deep concern if professional academic linguists are so absorbed by problems of government and binding in syntax that communication engineers, information technologists, logopedists and aphasiologists, language planners, translators and interpreters, educationists concerned with normal child language development and the language aspects of learning across the curriculum as well as all those concerned with the consequences of the increasing internationalisation of life, from the management of multinational corporations, the conduct of international and supranational organisations and authorities to the impact on individual lives of personal mobility and the need for access to information, must all fend for themselves and develop, ad hoc, their particular linguistic expertise.

It is, of course, the fundamental *raison d'etre* of our Association to bring together academic linguists and phoneticians with practising members of the various professions that use language as a tool, or have to deal with social problems with a significant language component. This breadth of concern was laid down at the Inaugural Meeting in Reading in 1967, though a more restricted field had originally been envisaged. BAAL came into existence as the British affiliate of the International Association for Applied Linguistics, usually known as AILA, the acronym of its French title, which itself came into existence before any of the 40 or so national affiliates which now compose it. Following the signature of the European Convention for Cultural Cooperation, meetings were held in Strasbourg and in Stockholm to consider a programme for the promotion of language learning in the states signatory to the Convention. It was clear, even at that time, that the ever closer cultural cooperation among European countries to be expected with the development of increasingly close social, economic and political links intended by the Council of Europe and the Treaty of Rome, would require a great increase in the quantity and quality of language teaching in all member countries and at all levels. It was at first hoped that a European Language Institute could be established, but this project foundered owing to the non-availability of finances and, at that early stage, the absence of the necessary political will.

Recently, following the agreement of the member states of the European Community to replace the Treaty of Rome in 1992 by a closer form of union, it has become a matter of much greater urgency to equip young people with the knowledge, understanding and skills they will certainly need to meet the challenges of the new Europe, and to take the necessary steps to provide the facilities which will enable adults to cope with the demands, linguistic and cultural, that the opportunities and pressures for personal mobility will bring. In these circumstances, a European Language Institute could perform a most useful function and international pressure for its establishment is again mounting, as Professor van Els' contribution to this volume indicates.

In 1962, however, the moment was not ripe and it was decided instead to launch a 10-year major Project under the aegis of the Council of Europe, with the objects of establishing good working relations among institutions in different member countries concerned with language teaching, promoting the adoption of the (at that time) new audio-visual methodology and, more generally, encouraging the close cooperation between academic linguists and practising language teachers. To this end AILA was founded and throughout the 60s a series of *stages* were organised in different member countries, in which a European policy on language teaching was gradually evolved, culminating in Recommendation (69)2 of the Committee of Ministers, which had a powerful influence on the language policies of the member states of the Council of Eu-

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rope. It was customary to hold meetings of the AILA committee in connection with the Council of Europe *stages* and to use the occasion to encourage the foundation of national affiliates or to strengthen those already in existence. In this process, an indefatigable role was played by our late Swedish colleague, Max Gorosh. In 1964, a first small-scale International Colloquy on Applied Linguistics was organised by the Association Française de Linguistique Appliquée in Nancy. The second was to be held in Britain. A great deal of preliminary work was undertaken by the University of Essex, which found that the existence of a sponsoring organisation was a prerequisite for official support. It was in that context that the decision to found BAAL was taken, with the proposed aims and objectives the same as those of AILA. These were not solely confined to foreign language teaching. International organisations are obliged to spend a high proportion of their resources on interpretation and translation, and machine translation was included in the AILA remit as an area in which the application of linguistics might produce valuable economies. In fact, disillusion with the machine translation set in during the sixties, as the complexity of the translation process was revealed, and the fading of that interest left language teaching as the sole concern.

The proposal to found a British Association of Applied Linguistics came opportunely. Starting with the School of Applied Linguistics in Edinburgh, a number of universities had set up departments of applied linguistics, largely to provide the professionalisation of the teaching of English as a foreign language which the British Council considered to be necessary in the national interest, especially at a time when the common use of English was seen to be an important factor in the survival of the Commonwealth as an effective political and economic partnership. The first attempts to join the Common Market had encountered resistance, and led the British Government to stimulate increased proficiency in foreign languages. The Committee on Research and Development in Modern Languages was set up and commissioned research in that field on a substantial scale from the newly established Departments of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics. Language Centres were established in universities and polytechnics. Language laboratories were set up in schools, involving substantial investment and the Nuffield Foundation, later Schools Council, projects for the development of audio-visual language courses were generously funded, with the intention of stiffening the modern languages provision in comprehensive secondary schools and in primary schools, both of which meant a great extension of modern language provision, placing considerable strain on teaching resources. It was at this time that the Centre for Information on Language Teaching was instituted. As a result there was a great swell of interest on the part of teachers in the help they might receive from linguists in the difficult yet promising situation they were facing. A language teaching section was set up in the Linguistics Association of Great Britain, itself still a young body, the meetings of which were animated and enthusiastic, but from the point of view of professional academic linguists and applied linguists, prone to be opiniated and ill-informed. The professionals felt the need to form a professional association, in which well-qualified people could exchange experience and informed opinion on the development of a new disciplinary area of which much was expected and whose resources were already under some strain. The interest aroused by the BAAL proposal was considerable and the inaugural meeting at Reading was well-attended and enthusiastic.

A number of us felt, however, that a constitutional restriction of BAAL's concerns to language teaching (not only modern foreign languages; under the influence of M.A.K.Halliday the teaching of English as a Mother Tongue was also brought in) and machine translation was too limiting. Members of Departments of Linguistics were present because of their wish to see the findings of the science brought to bear on the social problems of the day. We felt that though language teaching would undoubtedly be the most active field of application in the immediate future, it was unnecessary and inadvisable to tie the hands of ourselves and our successors when they wished to respond to new needs, some of which we could foresee, but others - perhaps the most important - might arise in an unexpected fashion. Although the main driving force was undoubtedly the need of members of Departments of Applied Linguistics and colleagues in language centres to create a forum for the discussion of their common problems in professionalising language teaching (especially EFL) and agreeing its theoretical basis, the wider view prevailed and BAAL accepted, at least in principle, the wider remit.

In the event, the University of Essex was unable to proceed with the organisation of a second International Colloquy and I agreed to organise what became the Second International Congress of Applied Linguistics in Cambridge in 1969. The wider remit was represented in the title of the Congress and its Proceedings: *Applications of Linguistics*. In the plenary sessions and in the section meetings, we attempted to represent as wide a range as possible of the areas of concern to which applied linguistics should address itself. The 14 sections were:

Section 1. Linguistics applied to literary texts; (3 papers)
Section 2. Computer analysis of texts, (covering applications to information retrieval and language teaching); leader R.Wisby (4 papers)
Section 3. Research in the psychology of first language learning; leader D.Bruce (4 papers)

I suppose now we should say "acquisition and learning"; at the time we wished to indicate that we should welcome studies such as that presented by John Mountford on "initial standard literacy" as well as that from David Crystal on "non-segmental phonology in first language acquisition".

Section 4. Research in the psychology of second language learning; leader P.Pimslow (14 papers)

Section 5. Speech research and its applications; leader G.Fant (8 papers, mostly concerned with educational applications such as the teaching of the deaf and second language learning, but also treating automatic speech recognition)

Section 6. Technology of language learning; leader R.A.Becher (21 papers, mostly concerned with the language laboratory, including Peter Streven's pointed question: "Where has all the money gone?", but also covering broadcast-led multi-media courses, computer-assisted instruction and the use of closed-circuit television in the teaching of phonetics)

Section 7. Language teaching methods and material; leader A.Hood Roberts (30 papers, divided into two sub-sections, 17 on materials, 13 on methodology)

Section 8. Linguistic aspects of speech disorders and therapy; leader S.Smith (6 Papers, covering both developmental and generative disorders)

Section 9. Lexicography; leader B.Quemada (12 papers, covering dictionary-making, thesaurus construction, terminology development and vocabulary acquisition and learning)

Section 10. Language testing material; leader A.Davies (8 papers, all concerned with second or foreign language testing)

Section 11. Measurement and classification of second language error; leader S.P.Corder (6 papers)

Section 12. Theory of translation; leader W.Wiles (4 papers, covering interpretation as well as written translation)

Section 13. Contrastive linguistics; leader G.Nickel (19 papers)

Section 14. Sociolinguistics; leader J.Gumperz (9 papers, only one concerned with foreign language learning)

It will be seen that of the 147 papers presented to sections, 103 or 70% were devoted to second or foreign language learning. The remaining 30%, 44 papers, ranged over literary analysis, information retrieval, child language acquisition, literacy, language development programmes for the disadvantaged, speech pathology and therapy, automatic speech recognition, dictionary and thesaurus construction, terminology development, translation and interpretation, language planning, language attitudes, language register and variety, differentiation of standard languages, language and drug abuse.

In his plenary presentation, Joshua Fishman, taking Fergusson and Morgan's 1959 classification of applied linguistics in the United States, added the creation of writing systems, orthographic reform and societal bilingualism. In his survey of applied computational linguistics, in addition to areas explored in the corresponding section, David Hays covered concordance-writing, grammatical parsing programmes, correction of typing errors, topic and attitudinal analysis, editing, tutorials, question-answering systems and man-machine communication. In all these areas, explicit linguistic information must be programmed into the computer for it to operate. Many applications which at that time were at an early stage of development have now become commonplace, and many others have come into general use which were not listed - in some cases not foreseen, even in Fujimura's sophisticated account of computer technology in language teaching and testing. Some applications, notably machine translation and automatic speech recognition (as opposed to speech synthesis, which has achieved a high level of realism at the phonetic level and is now rapidly developing at higher levels) have proved more recalcitrant than engineers had anticipated. The obstacles to progress seem to be over-whelmingly of linguistic, or even psycholinguistic character.

As a result of the participation in the 1969 AILA Congress of applied linguists from all parts of the world, some 700 all told, AILA rapidly expanded, outgrowing its European origins and moving from the sphere of the Council of Europe to that of UNESCO, which has recently accorded AILA Category 'B' status. The concern of the 40 national affiliates of AILA and its scientific commissions are still weighted towards aspects of language teaching, but the wider remit has continued to provide the framework for successive Congresses. The VIIIth Congress, recently held in Sydney, Australia, had 20 sections, for which 340 papers were announced. Of these 150, or 44% were concerned with second or foreign languages. This shows a markedly less dominant position than the 70% of papers in Cambridge. The other topics covered at Cambridge were all still represented in the section papers, meetings of AILA scientific commissions and special symposia which together made up the programme of the Congress. There were, however, shifts of interest. 46 papers were offered in discourse analysis, and 53 in the various areas of language planning and the problems of multilingual societies, such as minority languages, contact languages, pidgins and creoles, multilingualism, migrant education, etc. On the other hand, interest in contrastive linguistics and error analysis was greatly reduced, and had moved from phonological and grammatical studies to pragmatics, speech acts and cross-cultural studies. Interest in the area of educational technology had shifted almost entirely from the language laboratory to the role of computer technology, in which only one section paper had been offered 20 years earlier. A few topics, such as language and sex and language and ideology, which had not been treated in Cambridge, found some interest and support at Sydney.

Some of the changes noted may, of course, be attributable to regional differences of emphasis. Applied linguists in Australia are greatly concerned with the transition from previous White Australia policy to a multi-racial and multicultural policy, which has brought with it the need to re-think migrant and aboriginal education, whilst questions of language planning (including the development of national standard languages and their role in education and other aspects of the national life) are of vital importance to the developing ex-colonial countries of South East Asia (and, of course, elsewhere). Other changes indicate new priorities in response to new situations. Overall, however, the general framework of concerns has remained remarkably stable over the last twenty years. This fact does not indicate stagnation. An analysis of the papers offered within the sections would show the extent to which the treatment of each theme has moved on. It does indicate that the areas delineated at Cambridge are of permanent concern to applied linguists. Our Association should be keeping them all under review and acting as a focus for the interaction of all the different categories of scholars and professional colleagues involved. It is of great importance that the problems of language in society should be seen and treated as one interconnected whole, and not allowed to disintegrate into a chaos of unconnected specialisms. We are, of course, strongest in the areas of EFL, modern languages and mainstream English teaching. We have a good representation, which we must cherish, of colleagues working with ethnic minorities and with the speech and language handicapped. We should strengthen links with lexicographers, translators and interpreters and particularly with those involved in communications engineering and information technology. We should seek for opportunities to involve professional language users in the legal profession (the most responsible and meticulous codifiers and manipulators of language), journalism and the mass media, politics and public administration, industrial management. How else are we to create an informed public opinion, so obviously lacking when language issues are discussed? We should ask ourselves, in all seriousness: what have they to offer, out of their experience, to applied linguistics and what has applied linguistics to offer to them? What, in fact, prevents us from recognising in them fellow applied linguists? Why is this so and what can we do about it?

For the most part, this paper has been retrospective in character. What of the next twenty years? Perhaps the first thing to say is that twenty years is not so very long a period. One would expect the majority of today's social language problems still to be with us. Some uncertainties may be resolved. Will the ethnic minority communities maintain their languages and cultures, or will they assimilate into the host community as the younger generations are continuously exposed to its many pressures? What predictions are made by socio-linguistic theory? What difference to theory will it make if those predictions are not fulfilled? Or to the advice we should give for the handling of the rather different kind of mobility to be expected after 1992, when the new arrangements for European unity come into effect? Are we to expect an accelerated interpenetration of national languages and cultures? If so, what will the language behaviour of

Europe look and sound like in the early twenty-first century? How far will the new technologies have developed? Will electronic speech recognition and machine translation have been achieved? If so, what will be the consequences for man-machine communication and for language learning and use? What is the future for language teachers? In what ways will their role and the status change? Will readier access to information and the improvement of telecommunications make language learning more of an autonomous process with less dependence on teaching? Can interpretation and translation continue to bear the brunt of international communication? Will the increasing volume of international communication reach the point where a single second language will become a necessary part of compulsory education? Will it be a natural language or will the Esperanto lobby have become powerful enough to achieve its own universalist dream? The questions crowd in and, of course, the most important is often the one no-one had asked! We seem to be in the midst of revolutionary changes brought about by communications and information technology which are rapidly making the traditional structures of society irrelevant and obsolete. How will our own society, as a more-or-less integrated part of Europe in a shrinking world context, respond to the challenge? What will be the role of language in that response, and what will be the consequent demands upon all those who, in so many different ways, are professionally concerned with language? What will the linguists, theoretical and applied, who have decided to devote their careers to the understanding of this phenomenon central to human existence do to influence and monitor events? As Chairperson of BAAL, one feels also obliged to pose the final question: when the Chairperson in 2007 looks back over the previous twenty years, what will he or she be able to say that the British Association for Applied Linguistics has done to make things better?

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EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENTS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Theo van Els
University of Nijmegen
Institute of Applied of Linguistics

Introduction

In this paper I will discuss recent developments in applied linguistics, but I will restrict myself to that part of the field that is covered in the book that I, with a team of collaborators, brought out towards the end of 1984, entitled *Applied Linguistics and the Learning and Teaching of Foreign Lanaguages* (Van Els, Bongaerts, Extra, Van Os and Janssen-van Dieten, 1984). My topic, therefore, is developments, trends and issues in the study of foreign language learning and teaching. My aim is not to treat all the developments, trends and issues, but just a number of them, that is to say, the ones that I think I am most capable of dealing with and that may, at the same time, be of some interest to a British audience. The title of this paper speaks of 'European' developments in the field of applied linguistics. When the title was suggested to me by Walter Grauberg as planner of the programme, I accepted it, remembering his reassuring remark that I would not be expected to know everything about every country. Had I then known how few European countries I would actually find the opportunity to bring up for treatment here, I might have been more reluctant to accept the suggested title. Two countries in particular will figure regularly in my treatment, viz. the Federal Republic of Germany and The Netherlands.

Finally, in conformity with the other review papers in this volume, I will not only deal with 'current issues and preoccupations' and how they evolved from the past, but I will also attempt to indicate 'what may be forthcoming developments'.

Historical developments and current issues

David Stern, in his monumental book entitled *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*, has underscored the importance of 'historical awareness as a step' to developing a foreign language teaching theory (see Stern, 1983:75 ff.). He has also pointed out, however, that so far "studies of special aspects have not been carried out in sufficient number, scope, and depth to allow the piecing together of a fully satisfactory general history of language teaching and learning" (*op.cit.* ital:77). As Konrad Schroder, from Augsburg University in the Federal Republic, wrote in 1975, historical descriptions are very often reduced to very broad abstractions, which fact of necessity leads to a distortion of historical reality (see Schroder, 1975:xix). To cite Stern (*op.cit.*) ital more: "Suspicions regarding the soundness of some historical common introductions are aroused by the extraordinary similarity between them. The same historical characters occur; the same quotations are cited". This, then, is the first important caveat that you have to keep in mind when I make general statements on trends and developments.

The second caveat concerns the degree to which major developments that one discerns over a period of time, especially when the period is such a short one as the one that we are dealing with, are actually very special. To quote once more two frequently cited statements from one of the rare full treatments of the history of foreign language teaching, Kelly's *25 Centuries of Language Teaching:* "modern experts have spent their time in discovering what other men have forgotten", and: "much that is being claimed as revolutionary in this century is merely a rethinking and renaming of early ideas and procedures" (Kelly, 1969ix). The more one goes back to primary historical sources, the more one realizes how apt Kelly's observations are. Such primary sources may be historical course-books, as in Schroder's study of manuals for the study of English as a foreign language in German speaking countries, or treatises of foreign language teaching theory, as for example Seidelmann's monograph first published in 1725, recently re-issued with an extensive introduction by Frank Zapp and Konrad Schroder (see Zapp and Schroder, 1984). There are numerous examples to be found in Seidelmann's treatise of well-balanced opinions and pieces of advice based on teaching experience that sound very new and modern. A similar surprise find - and there must be more such works waiting to be discovered in our libraries - is a Dutch monograph published in 1829. In English, its title would be something like: 'A New Way of Teaching Foreign Languages, in a natural and Mechanical Way'. The author, who claims that he is propagating a new approach developed in Paris, advocates the utilization of slot-filling techniques, i.e. pattern practice, in order to make pupils acquire foreign language competence 'in accordance with the course of nature' (Roggen, 1829:32).

A third important caveat evolves from another observation that stems from David Stern. Let me quote him again: "An historical survey should (but rarely does) distinguish between the history of *ideas* on language teaching and the development of *practice*, because evidence from polemical or theoretical writings cannot be treated as the same as evidence from language teaching manuals" (Stern, 1983:77). Evidence for the appropriateness of Stern's distinction we found in an investigation that we conducted recently into the actual practice of teaching English, French and German in the upper forms of Dutch secondary schools (see Van Els and Buis, 1987). We recorded current practice and also the developments that class-room teaching had under gone in the past five to ten years. We found that both as to content and as to teaching approach there *is* a definite tendency towards a newer, more modern practice. But, changes have certainly been much less dramatic in practice than one would have expected from an examination of the relevant debate among theoreticians. We found that in schools - at least in Dutch schools - traces of the traditional grammar-translation method are still very much in evidence.

Let me now try to outline the developments that I think may be observed in the field of applied linguistics that I am dealing with here, i.e. the study of the learning and teaching of foreign languages. Before doing so it may be proper to devote some attention to the situation of the practice of foreign language teaching as such in Europe.

The Teaching of Foreign Languages in a Number of European Countries

A suitable point of comparison for a description of the foreign language teaching situation in European countries is provided by a fairly recent declaration of intent issued by the Ministers of Education of the European Community, June 1984. In the declaration all member - states commit themselves to taking all the necessary measures to ensure that as many pupils as possible, before the end of compulsory education, acquire what is called 'practical competence' in at least two foreign languages, one at least being the national language of one of the other member-states (see for a discussion of the declaration, Jacoby, 1985). On two points, actually, a comparison is made possible by this declaration. First, there is the question whether, how many and which foreign languages are to be taught. Second, there is the question what competence is pursued and achieved in the languages that are being taught.

Restricting ourselves to foreign language teaching (FLT) in compulsory education, as does the declaration of the European Ministers, with regard to the first question we may conclude that, very generally speaking, the learning of one foreign language is obligatory, in one way or another, in all countries of the European Community, except in England and Wales. The Netherlands is the only country with an obligatory language in primary education, viz. English. In many countries where there is an obligatory foreign language for everyone, the choice of the language in question is free. In actual practice the majority of pupils in most countries learn one particular language: English in France and West-Germany for example, and French in England and Wales. My impression is that there is no country - except, possibly, Luxemburg - in which *all* pupils learn two foreign languages in compulsory education. Of course, in almost all countries of the European Community there are groups of pupils who do learn two or more foreign languages, by choice or otherwise. The Netherlands is a case in point. Over 65% of all pupils, i.e. those who attend general secondary education, have three compulsory foreign languages in the first phase of secondary education, viz. English, French and German. The other 30% to 35% of the population, however, i.e. those attending the 'vocation-oriented' type of secondary education, may choose not to study any other foreign language besides obligatory English.

Summing up our findings with respect to how many foreign languages are being taught in compulsory education to how many pupils, we would have to conclude that so far it has been a matter of decreasing numbers rather than of increasing numbers, notwithstanding the 1984 declaration of intent of the European Community or similar declarations of the EC or other international bodies. The overall situation may not be quite as bleak as it is in the United States, but some of the qualifications that Americans use to describe their own country's position would not fall wide of the mark, when applied to some of the European countries. I am thinking of such qualifications as one finds in the title and in the section headings of Lurie's (1982) article: "America ... Globally Blind, Deaf and Dumb", "America's Scandalous Incompetence in Foreign Languages" and "Provincialism" and "Dangerously Inadequate Understanding of World Affairs".

Turning now to the second point of comparison, i.e. the kind of foreign language competence taught and the levels actually achieved by pupils, there is very little we can say with any degree of certainty. So much, however, does seem certain: there has been a gradual change to teaching actual competence in the language rather than knowledge about the language, and to teaching oral competence rather than written competence. But we just do not know what levels of competence are achieved and whether they in any way come near to what the European Ministers had in mind when they said they would aim for 'practical competence'. As I have pointed out elsewhere (see Van Els, forthcoming), we have no reason to be optimistic on this score. For example, the information that at least 90% of all pupils in England and Wales learn French in secondary schools, sounds promising; but when, subsequently, one sees figures which reveal that about three quarters of the pupils drop French after two or three years, one can hardly imagine that the net-result from a point of view of 'practical competence' can amount to much. Another point that also causes me to be somewhat pessimistic is the following. My own country is well-known for its wealth of FLT, and the Dutch are much praised, internationally, for their competence in foreign languages. This makes me very suspicious, suspicious mainly of what the achievements are of FLT in most of the other European countries. For I only know too well how much the achievements of our FLT still leave to be desired. The 'practical competence' in English of many Dutch people, especially of those who have only attended the lower types of secondary education, is often minimal, even after four years of English. The 'practical competence' in French of many Dutch academics and of people in similar professions, has been shown, in a large foreign language needs research project conducted in the 70s, to be totally insufficient for the purposes for which it is needed, despite the fact that the majority have had six years of French at school, three hours per week on average.

So much for the situation of FLT in Europe at the moment. The information given, demonstrates - very roughly, I admit - that, if ever FLT was in need of assistance from applied linguistics, that need has not diminished in the past two decades. The information given should also serve as a background to my treatment later on of might - or, rather, should be - forthcoming developments.

Developments in the Field of Applied Linguistics

Before embarking on a discussion of forthcoming developments, however, let us first have a look retrospectively at what developments the field of applied linguistics has gone through so far. In this, as well I will confine my attention only to developments in the sub-field of applied linguistics that deals with foreign language learning and teaching, but let me just mention in passing two points in connection with the whole field. One is that over the years applied linguistics has focussed more and more on a restricted number of sub-fields, by far most attention being given to the learning and teaching of languages, i.e. first, second and foreign languages. This development may be inferred from the programmes of consecutive ALLA World Congresses, but also from consecutive issues of such journals as the Belgian *ITL Review of Applied Linguistics* and the French *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquee*. The other point is the fairly recent boom in the attention applied linguists devote to applications of information science and (micro) computers and the subsequent revived interest in automatic translation. Ample evidence of this development is to be gleaned from congress reports, as for example of the 1984 annual meeting of the German Association of Applied Linguistics (see Kuhlwein, 1986). In this connection we would like to add in passing that in our investigation of foreign language teaching practice in the upper forms of Dutch secondary education we found a very positive attitude among teachers towards the introduction of microcomputers as learning and teaching aids, which we thought was somewhat surprising in view of the very disappointing experiences of teachers in secondary schools, in my country, with the language laboratory in the recent past (see Van Els and Buis, 1987:76).

Developments in the Field of Foreign Language Teaching Research

At the beginning of the period that I am surveying, Walter Grauberg undertook a study of the role and structure of university language centres in Europe, commissioned by the Council of Europe (see Grauberg, 1971). What he found in 1971, was a great variety of centres, most of them owing their emergence to attempts in the 1960's at reforming university language teaching. Grauberg categorizes the thirty centres or so that he visited into five different groups:

- **comprehensive centres**, responsible for all the language teaching in their university;
- **centres mainly devoted to the teaching of non-linguists;**

- **multi-purpose centres**, former language laboratory units that had developed also their own teaching and research function;
- **centres oriented towards research and the teaching of applied linguistics;**
- **centres oriented towards the training of teachers.**

One of Grauberg's concluding remarks is: "Vigorous research activity is essential to gain recognition in an academic environment where language teaching is still not always considered an academic discipline. Centres devoted to the teaching of methodology and to research seem best placed for growth" (*op.cit.*:61). Of the exclusively research-oriented type, only five were identified by Grauberg. The largest single group was constituted by the multi-purpose centres, which did, therefore, all have a research function of their own, but which all of them also were small in size. The situation, we may conclude, for research into foreign language teaching was still very insecure in the early 1970s. How have things developed in the meantime?

I will not attempt an overall survey of the present state of affairs of the university language centres in all the countries on which Grauberg provides information. If in other countries things have developed along the same lines as in The Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany, the picture at the moment is not really very positive. In my country two of the multi-purpose centres, the Institutes of Applied Linguistics in the Free University of Amsterdam and my own Institute in Nijmegen, have grown and they have definitely established themselves as research centres and as departments of applied linguistics, with a full professorship each and providing courses in applied linguistics. In Leiden and the University of Amsterdam the multi-purpose centres have lost ground, and the centre in Groningen still seems to be struggling. The one centre that in 1970 was fully oriented towards research and the teaching of applied linguistics, the Institute of Applied Linguistics of the University of Utrecht, - quite contrary to what Grauberg foresaw in 1971 - has had a very negative history, i.e. it has disappeared. All in all, positive and negative developments taken together, the situation is not quite bad, but not as good as one would have hoped or expected. The same conclusion seems to apply to the situation in the Federal Republic, where two centres have definitely established themselves fully as research institutes and departments of applied linguistics, viz. the Universities of Bochum and Hamburg. From a German survey of 1983 one gathers that other centres have failed to improve their research capacity in the field of applied linguistics (see Koordinierungsgremium, 1983:64 ff.).

However, the actual volume of research executed has clearly increased over the years, particularly in the Federal Republic, as we shall see presently. Not all research in the field, of course, is the responsibility of language centres or Institutes of Applied Linguistics. It has been said before (see Van Els et al., 1984:140 ff.) that one of the characteristic features of the development of our field is that, after centuries in which there was continual change without any actual progress - Mackey's (1965:138) 'swings of the pendulum of fashion', - we now find ourselves in an era in which the problem of foreign language teaching can be tackled in a scientific way. To arrive at this 'age of enquiry' in the eighties we have had to pass through an 'age of awareness' first, according to Wilkins (1981). Would it be too far-fetched to suggest that the astonishing way in which again and again the ideas of great minds, as for instance Seidelmann's whom we mentioned above, have been forgotten in the history of foreign language teaching, has to be blamed on the fact that these ideas - however sound and well-reasoned in themselves - when put forward, lacked all proper empirical underpinning? (See Van Els and Radstake, 1987:14).

One sign of the increased importance of foreign language teaching research is, no doubt, the interest that at least some national research funding organisations have begun to take in the field. In the federal Republic the 'German Research Council' has funded a special programme in what was called the field of 'Sprachlehrforschung', which ran from 1973 to 1981. Over 20 projects were funded in that period, and - to give some idea of the moneys involved - funding amounted to about 3 million German marks between 1977 and 1981. A full report of the programme and of the individual research projects is given in Koordinierungsgremium (1983). In The Netherlands, about 10 years ago, the Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research acknowledged Applied Linguistics as a separate discipline by creating for it, within the Organization, a special working group for Applied Linguistics, through which it annually funds on average six to seven research projects, usually involving one full-time researcher each. There are also other external, and internal, funds available to finance university research projects, but it would lead too far astray to go into any further detail.

Let us, finally, look at another measure of the volume of research activity, viz. at numbers of publications dealing with actual research. The number of publications is, no doubt, whichever way one looks at it, an indication of the state of affairs in a field of study. One knows, of course, that all kinds of objections can be raised against such counts. I am not going to deal with these problems and, although I am well aware that even more objections can be raised against the very tentative and provisional count that I have made, I still think that the count that I am presenting in table 1 is certainly indicative of a number of things.

Let me briefly explain how I arrived at the figures. In my institute we have a fairly representative collection of books and journals in the field of applied linguistics. All the important international journals are represented and there are about 5000 volumes: handbooks, monographs, proceedings and readers, not including foreign language teaching materials, of course. All journals, from their first issues, all the books acquired since about 1976 and some of the books from before 1976, have been systematically catalogued in a fully computerized bibliographical system. I have had separate lists printed, for four consecutive periods of 5 or 6 years, of all books and articles to which the key-word 'foreign language teaching' and also either the key-word 'empirical research' or the key-word 'research report' has been attributed. The total number of items I found was 218.

Table 1: Number of publications dealing with FLT research.

	1966-71	1972-76	1977-81	1982-8	TOTAL
Belgium	-	-	-	4	4
FRG	4	9	19	47	79
France	1	-	2	6	9
Great-Britain	1	4	3	5	13
Netherlands	-	3	7	15	25
Scandinavia	3	8	2	6	19
Other W&E Eur. countries	-	2	3	4	9
USA/Canada	6	11	7	31	55
Other countries	-	-	2	3	5
TOTAL	15	37	45	121	218

In table 1 these publications have been categorized according to the country in which the research was carried out. What one sees is first of all a continuous increase in publications dealing with FLT research over the past twenty years. The increase is particularly striking for the fourth period. The share that individual countries take in the total output, varies a great deal. Particularly low is the share of both France and Great Britain. Whereas there is an overall increase in the output for all countries over the period, Scandinavia is an exception to this rule: the figure here for 1972/76 reflects the activities in connection with the well-known GUME-project (see Von Elek and Oskarsson, 1975). The final point that I would like to draw your attention to is the fact that the Federal Republic has produced a great number of more 'general' works, i.e. German works discussing research planning, design, or policy, most of them in the last few years. I will briefly return to this presently.

In order to get at least some idea of the validity of the figures in table 1, I carried out a second search in our computized bibliographical system. In this second search I selected all those documents that had been assigned either 'empirical research' or' research report', as I had done in the first, but instead of just adding 'foreign language teaching' as a selection term, I added 'foreign language teaching or foreign language learning or second language teaching or second language learning'. Thus, a total of 892 publications were selected. They were categorized according to country and time period in the same way, with the results shown in table 2.

Table 2: Number of publications dealing wih research on FL/L2 learning and teaching.

	1966-71	1972-76	1977-81	1982-87	TOTAL
Belgium	-	2	3	11	16
FRG	13	44	85	94	236
France	3	4	3	14	24
Great-Britain	11	8	11	19	49
Netherlands	2	17	48	78	145
Scandinavia	4	8	10	15	37
Other W&E Eur. countries	6	10	11	19	46
USA/Canada	33	60	96	122	311
Other countries	1	2	11	14	28
TOTAL	73	155	278	386	892

As you can see, the overall tendencies in table 2 are comparable to those in table 1: a general increase over the years, and a relatively minor contribution from France and Great Britain. It is also noteworthy that the share from the USA and Canada has risen remarkably (from 25% in table 1 to 35% in table 2), mainly as a result of the wealth of Canadian publications on L2 learning and teaching.

Let me just add one final comment concerning these figures. What they irrefutably show is that there has been an increase of empirical research in the period that we are discussing. That in itself is very gratifying. What the figures do not show, however, is how our field compares in this respect to other fields of research. Whether, therefore, the rate of growth of applied linguistic research is satisfactory in comparison with that of other fields, or (for that matter) in proportion to the need for research in the field of foreign language teaching, we do not know at all.

Applied Linguistics: A Discipline in Its Own Right?

I promised that I would return to the extraordinarily high proportion of 'general' publications in the German Federal Republic, appearing especially in the last few years. Germans have a reputation, at least in my country, that is borne out by these figures: they tend to indulge in rather philosophical discussions concerning the foundations of science, and questions of research design and methodology. However, there is more to it than that. Part of the 'general' items originating from Germany are concerned with the status of the study of foreign language teaching itself, as a discipline in its own right. A hot debate has been raging in the last few years between the defenders of an independent position for the discipline, called 'Sprachlehrforschung' on the one hand, and a group of Second Language Researchers, so-called 'Zweitspracherwerbsforscher', on the other. The first group centres round the two university research centres of Bochum and Hamburg that we have mentioned before, and their chief spokesman is Professor Bausch; the two chief 'Zweitspracherwerbsforscher' are Professors Wode and Felix. I refer those interested in this discussion, to the report of the Koordinierungsgremium (1983) referred to above. There are also ten papers read at a two-day symposium specifically devoted to the discussion, edited by Bausch and Konigs (1986); and there are a number of articles in *Die neueren Sprachen*, 1985, see Bausch and Konigs (1985), Felix and Hahn (1985), and Wode (1985). When one examines these and other contributions to the discussion, one is at first a bit surprised not only at the fierceness with which some participants attack their opponents, but especially at the fact that in circles of applied linguists the question of identity should still be an arguable point. What is surprising, moreover, is that on closer scrutiny one discovers that even the 'Zweitspracherwerbsforscher' do not really deny 'Sprachlehrforschung' its own place. As far as I have able to make out, none of the contestants would disagree with what we said (in Van Els et al., 1984:139), when summing up our discussion of the issue: 'Applied linguistics, the study of the teaching and learning of foreign languages, is an autonomous discipline. It is an interdisciplinary subject which takes its research questions from FLT itself and which in trying to answer them turns to the source disciplines in which it looks for hypotheses about possible solutions, which are then tested empirically'. Bausch and his colleagues would never really want to disregard the findings of second language acquisition research, nor would Felix and Wode claim they have all the answers as 'Zweitspracherwerbsforscher' to solve the problems in foreign language teaching. The point at issue between the two groups, I think, is a different one. It is more practical and less philosophical than the contestants would make us believe. Bausch and colleagues seem to be of the opinion that foreign language teaching is not getting enough research attention, and accuse (with or without good reason) others of prowling on their territory.

Important Research Priorities

This, then, brings me to the final section of this paper, in which I will discuss briefly some developments that I would like to see in the future. First of all, the interpretation that I suggested for Bausch's exasperation at the alleged claims of Felix and Wode was that according to him foreign language teaching research is just not getting enough attention. That is an opinion that I share and I expect that many of you may be of the same opinion. But there is something else the matter with the research in our field, and it may well be that there lies another explanation for Bausch's worries. I think that there is not enough research that concerns questions that originate primarily in foreign language teaching as such. If applied linguistics is basically a 'problem oriented discipline', as Elisabeth Ingram phrased it (see Ingram, no date) developments in the field have not been such that the problems raised by foreign language teaching itself have always, or even most of the time, been the main source of research activities. The infrastructure of applied linguistics, as represented in university language centres, has not been strong enough so far to do full justice to the research needs of the problem area. And that may well be the main reason why, regularly, the danger is very imminent that foreign language teaching will again be turned into the child of fashion of any new development in any of the source disciplines, most of all linguistics, of course. That danger may well be what (somewhat emphatically and frantically) Bausch and colleagues are trying to ward off.

The other related point that has been lacking so far is some kind of direction or coherence to the research activities in our field. Most of it happens in a haphazard way. You will, no doubt, recognize this all around you as well. I personally do not know of any research plan or programme that is built up round the two questions that are fundamental to foreign language teaching, (as they are to all teaching as a matter of fact): **what** is to be taught, and **how** is one to teach? Not even the research programme of the 'German Research Council', to which we referred above, had that kind of coherence.

The two major developments, therefore, that I would like to see come about in the future are: more foreign language teaching research of an empirical kind in which the needs of the field are the prime consideration, and secondly greater coherence and well-thought-out planning of such research. It would lead too far to elaborate further upon these two desiderata. I might have expanded also on a third development that I think deserves serious consideration at the moment. That third issue is whether it would not be a good idea to set up in Europe, some kind of counterpart to the recently founded 'National Foreign Language Centre' in the United States. I myself think that there is a need for a truly independent research centre with a long-term research agenda of its own, geared to the actual needs of the field of foreign language teaching.

Conclusion

Let me conclude with a historical anecdote that may contain a lesson or two for today. Its analogy with what is going on in Great Britain in the field of applied linguistics is striking enough, especially in comparison with what is going on in the Federal Republic of Germany. At any rate, the anecdote is amusing, as it stands.

When, on January 14, 1886, Henry Sweet (1845-1912) at the age of 40, wrote the Preface to a major publication of his *The Oldest English Texts*, he was not in a very happy mood. Eight years before, in 1878, he had started work on the project, which he had been planning for many years. Having finished the project at last, he had to admit that he would not be surprised if his critics found more errors in the texts than they should. But Sweet writes: "all I can say is, that I have put five times more labour into it than I ever anticipated, and am unable to give more". His mood comes out well in the sentence that follows immediately: "I may also remind my critics that I am not paid for my work, that I have no official position to make me responsible to any one, and that all my scientific work is a free gift to my countrymen - or rather to the Germans". It is the latter addition - "or rather to the Germans" - that lays bare where the main reason lies for Sweet's exasperation. Let me quote a longer passage from the Preface; the passage which follows Sweet's account of how slowly his work had progressed:

> "Meanwhile, my interest in the work had been flagging more and more. When I first began it, I had some hopes of myself being able to found an independent school of English philology in this country. But as time went on it became too evident that the historical study of English was being rapidly annexed by the Germans, and that English editors would have to abandon all hopes of working up their materials themselves, and resign themselves to the more humble role of purveyors to the swarms of young program-mongers turned out every year by the German universities, so thoroughly trained in all the mechanical details of what may be called 'parasite philology', that no English dilettante can hope to compete with them - except by Germanizing himself and losing all his nationality. All this is of course inevitable - the result of our own neglect, and of the unhealthy over-production of the German universities - but it is not encouraging for those who, like myself, have had the mortification of seeing their favourite investigations forestalled one after another, while they are laboriously collecting their materials. But luckily the fields of linguistic science are wide, and there are regions as yet uninvaded by dissertations and programs, where I yet hope to do work that I need not be ashamed of. Indeed, my only regret now is that I did not abandon the historical study of English five years ago, so as to be able to devote myself entirely to the more important investigations which I have always carried on alongside of my Old English work. I am now resolved that I will take a rest from my long drudgery as soon as I have brought out the second

edition of my *History of English Sounds*".

At least, you now know to what - or rather, to whom - we all mainly owe Henry Sweet's great works in the field of foreign language teaching. Let me add that I sincerely hope that those among you who now work in this branch of applied linguistics in this country, will not let themselves be put off in their turn by the seemingly overwhelming amount of literature coming to them from the continent, in particular West Germany. For, we all know, in contrast to Sweet, that for us there *is* no other better branch of linguistics for which the study of applied linguistics can be abandoned.

Note

This is a partly revised version of the paper read at the 20th Annual BAAL Meeting, Nottingham, 13 September 1987. I owe a great debt of gratitude to Bert Weltens of the Institute of Applied Linguistics, Nijmegen, for his help in editing the text.

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TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION : RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

(for Roland Sussex)

Peter Newmark
University of Surrey

"25 years", John Trim states "is not a long time in language teaching". Extend this period to 35 years and you find the situation in translation and interpretation has been completely transformed.

Translation has become a profession, consisting of staff translators, revisers, freelancers, terminologists, contract (usually literary) translators, pre- and post-editors in Machine Translation. Its format has partly moved away from books to reports, contracts, brochures, manuals, magazines, instructions, notices, advertisements; its topic from literature and 'great works' to every type of information, with the emphasis on technology and business. Its readership has spread like democracy. In 1984 150 million pages were translated, employing 175,000 translators. The EEC at Brussels employed 2,500 translators and 500 interpreters, causing immense budget problems and spurring on the improvement of Machine Translation (MT). In 1957, the International Federation of Translators (FIT) was founded; it now has about 50 national members. Translation has been given greater prominence as a consequence of a number of international developments. These include: the increase in the number of international organisations: decolonisation of Africa and Asia and the consequent increased number of independent nations; the acceptance of bilingualism in many countries (eg. Spain, Czechoslovakia); the recognition of minority language groups in most countries; the continuously increasing importance of English as the world language, (over four times more is translated from English than from any other language); world-wide tourism, (multi-lingual brochures and notices); international trade, and a widening of democracy that goes with the concept of the particular value of every language and the liberating function of translation in combatting obscurantism, (a function that it has always had).

In summary the purposes of translation are perhaps fourfold:

1. to promote understanding between nations, groups and individuals;
2. to facilitate the spread of useful information (technology transfer);
3. to explain the features of national and regional cultures;
4. to further the appreciation of great works of literature, science and the humanities, many of which expose the harmful features of cultures (as does translation itself) within a universal ethical perspective or *optique*, (previously often its only purpose).

Vocational translation courses in many countries have been 'promoted' from institutes and colleges to polytechnics and universities. Thus training has become education. Whilst translation classes, (in two languages) are text-based, they now encompass a variety of formats (articles, reports, advertisements, textbooks), on a variety of topics (business and technology) are translated in a variety of ways (full translation, summary, gist, specific questions/functional translation). The texts themselves have to be self-sufficent with a statement of their sources : title, author, periodical or publisher, date, as they should be in any school or university examination. These are the basis of a curriculum, which is supported by courses in cultural, institutional and subject backgrounds; translation criticism; principles and methods of translation (previously known as 'translation theory'); the practice of MT, and optionally a third language and technical writing.

In language learning courses, translation is no longer a dirty word, though its position is controversial. Its use from L1 to L2 as a form of control or revision has to be examined, and from L2 to L1 its separate purposes : (a) accurate and economical rendering at author's or readership's level; (b) stylistic exercises; (c) L1 or L2 enrichment, have to determined.

In the last 35 years, many books and papers have been published about translation. Previously it was the subject primarily of literary essays and commentaries. It has become a branch of applied linguistics practised too often by linguists who are not writers and who are without professional experience of translation. Clearly some frame of reference for translators and particularly learners is now necessary. Translation is a creative, problem-solving occupation. The problems at all ranks of the text (from the morpheme or punctuation mark through collocations and metaphors etc., to clauses, sentences, paragraphs and up to the text itself) have to be related to a variety of contextual factors before a variety of translation procedures are considered and a choice recommended. The frame of reference is necessarily based on a theory of language and then a theory of translation. Both theories have to be stated, but their use to the translators derive from their application to the various problems. Therefore the analogous translation examples have to be cited. For example:

PROBLEM	CONTEXTUAL FACTORS	TRANSLATION PROCEDURES
Bundestag (in German SL Text)	Type of readership Source House style Text-type and category Recurrence Importance	Transference: *Bundestag* Recognized translation: *Bundestag* Official translation: *Federal German Parliament* Descriptive equivalent: *W.German Parliament* Cultural equivalent: *W.German House of Commons*

These considerations as I see it are the main part of a Principles and Methods of Translation course.

However, most writings on translation have been concerned with general theories of translation. Most notably they have dwelt upon the time- honoured enigmas; viz the definition of equivalence, translatability, invariance, fidelity, the unit of translation, free translation, literal translation and the respective merits of the two latter. The discussion of these issues is often conducted without translation examples, and therefore in the abstract and of no use to translators. Nevertheless significant contributions have been made about the relevance of social culture and the importance of the readership by Nida (1984); on standardizing translation procedures first by Vinay and Darbelnet (1964), then by Catford (1965); on the need to typologise texts by Reiss (1971) and House (1977) - for example you don't translate a lyrical poem and a soap advertisement in the same way; on the application of linguistics to poetry translation by Levy (1969); on the translation of metaphors by Dagut (1976); on the influence of prejudices on translation by Alknis (1980). Much has also been written on the application of text linguistics to translation. There remains however an appalling measure of disagreement on the qualities of a good translation : What is to be translated? - the words in their context, the message, the explicit meaning, the implicit meaning, what the author meant (but failed to state), the text corrected to the facts etc? And for whom? - the author's target language mirror image, the translator, the putative readership? And what is the place of literal translation in a good translation? There has also been too little written on the three stages of translating:

1. the approach
2. the process
3. the revision.

Translation is the superordinate term for converting the meaning of any source language utterance to the target language. In a narrower definition translation is written to written and interpretation is spoken to spoken. Interpretation (from the dragoman onwards) is one of the oldest of professions, but conference simultaneous interpretation came of age in the Nuremberg Trials of Nazi war criminals in 1945-47. Professional conference interpreters are employed by the international organisations and are members of AIIC, the International Association of Conference Interpreters. Full-time interpreters are more common in non-anglophone (particularly developing) countries than in anglophone countries, where they are usually employed on contract for particular engagements. Conference interpreting is a much smaller profession than translating.

In recent years the requirements for community interpreters in the courts, for doctors, for the police, for education and social welfare officials has been widely recognized. (For example there are 5 million Hispanics in the USA alone). In this country the profession is being certificated by the Institute of Linguists examination. Techniques of interpreting sign language for the deaf are being improved, and for TV and films the respective merits of sub-titling and dubbing (from lip-synchronisation) to nuclear-sync (synchronisation of emphasis and gesture) are being studied.

Specialized simultaneous and consecutive interpretation are taught in the UK at half a dozen institutions. The market and the candidates from African countries for these courses is often more numerous than from UK. As in translation, students do not specialize but study topics. To an outsider like myself the controversy about the most suitable symbol language for note-taking appears to be dead, as virtually all conference interpretation is in the booths. Further, in community interpretation the tiresome consecutive method should be unnecessary as a simultaneous whispered voice-over (or rather 'voice-under') should be more efficient.

Too much research has been devoted to interpretation aptitude testing. As in some other areas motivation is more important than aptitude, and (to my surprise and pleasure) John Henderson's unpublished doctoral thesis at Bradford demonstrated that there was little difference in temperament and character between interpreters and translators. Psycholinguistic research on memory-training, semantic differentials (Osgood) and body language is centrally applicable to interpretation, but the main research (and there has been too little) has to be focused on the *process* of interpreting which Lederer (1985) has pioneered. Of necessity in interpretation (but not in translation) the source language text disappears, is 'deverbalised' and the interpreters are forced to reproduce a reduced 'message' which is however enriched by observation and hearing of the speaker and secondly by their own tone of voice. Interpreters have to think fast - metaphors are more often reduced to sense than recreated - and to be wary of the immediate pragmatic effect on their speaker's audience. To my knowledge these matters have been insufficiently discussed. The literature on community interpreting here and in America is only in its infancy. A interesting paper is included in these Proceedings, (see Harrison *et al* this volume).

The prospects both for translation and interpretation are inevitably enormous, given the continuously increasing need for better communication between increasingly large and numerous groupings of languages.

To begin with, translation will become more visible and more public : not only in airports and rail terminuses, but also in railway and coach stations, notices and instructions will be frequently in three language (*Bienvenue à Leicester* is at the BR station even now). Owing to the bi- or multi-lingual composition of most countries and the spread of mass tourism, many newspapers and periodicals are likely to include abstracts and summaries in one or two foreign languages. Notices and guides in public buildings (as in Lloyds now), hotels, museums, churches, art galleries and tourist sights, will be multilingual. There will be more translation periodicals such as the remarkable *INDEX*. More poetry will be translated. In finance and industry translation will have more specific functions depending on the requirements of the client or the readership, taking the form of one or two answers to questions, as well as full translations. In literature the translation of works in languages of limited diffusion will have to increasingly subsidized by private agencies as well as UNESCO. The present position where most great writers are concentrated in the major languages is suspect. Due to the media, international organisations and other contacts, languages will to some extent converge lexically without in the foreseeable future reaching Walter Benjamin's ideal of a pure universal language. Translation will continue to function not only as an expositor but as an implicit exposer of the prejudices embedded in the practices as well as the languages of many national cultures.

Secondly there is going to be a large development of Machine Translation and Machine-aided Translation. Here such questions as : when will the computer translate better/more accurately/more quickly than a human? or when will the computer be able to translate (or write) poems are ridiculous and irrelevant. Humans and machines are not rivals. MT is not only possible, it is necessary, like translation. Humans have to use computers for translation, often pre-editing and normally post-editing the texts. The more conventional the language of the texts, the more efficiently the computer will be able to translate them. A poem or an originally written text is normally beyond the computer's competence. The main criterion for any computer's use is its cost-effectiveness.

Lastly, there is the future of the scientific factor in translation. In 1959 Nida entitled a pioneering book : *Towards a Science of Translating*. We are no nearer to it. The scientific element of translating is bound up with the place of literary translation - its place (a) in a translation and (b) more frequently as a yardstick (not a criterion), as a measure of translation. Most translation theorists reject it in both these roles, they mention it only to condemn it. An honourable exception must be made of the linguist Roland Sussex, who in a lecture five years ago appeared to accept it as a matter of course. It was a refreshing occasion. Literary translation won't go away.

The future of interpretation is also secure, and particularly in an age that prefers video and sound increasingly to the printed word. Community and conference interpretation will multiply. So will pre-translated recorded texts on TV, radio, cassettes, videos, multilingual automatic devices in art galleries, palaces, castles. We might with confidence await the age of Machine Interpretation (MI) when voice synthesizers will respond to voice synthesizers and humans are finally superfluous!!

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CLINICAL LINGUISTICS - RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

Pamela Grunwell
Leicester Polytechnic School of Speech Pathology

The 20-year lifespan of BAAL coincides with the creation of a new discipline within applied linguistics - clinical linguistics.

This is not to say that in 1967 the potential applications of linguistics to the investigation of communication disorders had not been appreciated. Clearly they had and by such well-known applied linguists as John Trim and Pit Corder. But this fact was not generally recognized in the circles where it needed to be practised - i.e. speech therapy education, training and service departments.

In the past 20 years linguistics has gradually come to hold a prominent position in Speech and Language Pathology in Britain. It is noteworthy that this is not the case elsewhere in the English-speaking world - most especially in the States, where linguistics is still very much a minority interest in education, research and practice in the field of Speech and Language Pathology. This difference is most graphically demonstrated by the fact that it was British applied linguists and British publications that first gave currency to the term clinical linguistics (and indeed to my own sub-specialism of clinical phonology) and it is in Britain that the new journal of *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics* have been launched.

In the retrospective section of this paper I shall therefore be tracing the emergence and recognition of this new field of applied linguistic endeavour. In so doing it will be helpful to discuss the three areas of activity in clinical linguistics separately; that is the education and training of speech pathologists/ therapists; professional practice and research. Of course, this is a false distinction in that education and training prepares for professional practice which in turn can lead into research, which in its turn is fedback into education and post- qualification training, i.e. continuing professional development. However, it is useful to use this distinction to impose some organization upon this review.

Although linguistics has now established itself as an indispensable foundation for the study and practice of speech and language pathology, this was not always the case. Indeed, by comparison with other branches of applied linguistics (language teaching; child language studies; literary stylistics, to name a few), linguistics came late to speech and language pathology. Perhaps the name of the profession was one of the deterrents - in the UK (though not elsewhere in the English-speaking world) it is still speech therapy. Other professionals - including linguists - imagined (and some still do) that we are only concerned with 'speech'. A brief historical excursus would I think be of assistance in understanding the background to the current British scene and why this traditional 'myth' took so long to dispel. One of the origins of British speech therapy in the

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1920s and 1930s was phonetics; (I emphasize one - there were others e.g. neurology; elocution....) In particular one line of development was associated with the British School of Phonetics lead by Professor Daniel Jones at University College London. This association continued after the establishment of the profession and the College of Speech Therapists, in 1947/8, through the training schools. The first training establishments were set up in London and they taught to a course determined by and examined by the College of Speech Therapists. Phonetics was a compulsory, examined subject in this course. And that subject was taught by members of Staff of the Department of Phonetics at University College - a situation which continued in many London training establishments virtually up to the beginning of the 1980s. It is noteworthy that a major degree course leading to a qualification to practice as a speech therapist is now based in this department. When in the 1950s and 1960s training establishments were set up outside London, they too taught to the same course; for the most part. There was one exception in the mid-1960s a course at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne - a forerunner of the new and current situation. Therefore, the provincial training establishments had to employ a member of staff - or more usually borrow a lecturer from the local university - to teach phonetics. In addition, the College of Speech Therapists employed examiners from University Departments of Phonetics; these examiners were also responsible for revisions and updating of the phonetics curriculum.

In this way the profession in its formative years preserved its link with its antecedents. But it did not venture much further than it had done originally into the study of phonetics: the main function of which was to provide a knowledge of articulatory phonetics and the normal pronunciation of English and skills in phonetic transcription, the latter to a very high level.

In the early 1960s there were indications of an impending change but it took a full decade before this change was realized. Indeed, the relationship between speech and language pathology and linguistics over the two decades resembles a protracted courtship, with repeated announcements of an engagement, but no date for the proposed marriage. These announcements are in the form of rather isolated exhortations by eminent applied linguists addressing speech pathology audiences and urging them to take an interest in linguistics. For example in 1963, John Trim gave a paper entitled *Linguistics and Speech Pathology* at a conference, the proceedings of which were published in a volume with the optimistic title: *Signs, Signals and Symbols: a presentation of the British approach to speech pathology and therapy.* In his paper Trim endeavoured (most convincingly in my opinion), to 'demonstrate that Linguistics and Speech Pathology have a good deal to contribute to each other'. At the beginning of his paper he suggests:

"The principle features of a linguistic approach to speech disorders would

> seem to me to be first, exact observation and recording of the patient's speech; secondly, the analysis of the linguistic system which is being operated by the patient, in cases of developmental disorder, or determination of the linguistic levels affected and to what extent in cases of traumatic or degenerative disorder. Thirdly, as exact as possible a localization of malfunction in the patient and the tracing of its ramifications throughout the speech events in which he participates; the assessment, in fact of its linguistic effects".

Thus we have at the very outset a clear statement of the aims of what we now call clinical linguistics. Trim goes on:

> 'The first of these principles is fundamental to all effective work in speech. For this purpose a sound phonetic training is indispensable. Fortunately this fact is well recognized by the College of Speech Therapists..... To illustrate the value of the second and third points to the therapist and also the value of the pathologist's findings for the development of linguistic theory, we may perhaps apply them to a number of speech disorders'.

This he proceeded to do. It is my impression however, that the impact of this paper on both training and practice was minimal. Most therapists trained during the 1960s claim to be totally ignorant of linguistics, at least as far as their knowledge is derived from their initial training course. The few British publications that there are from that time also show little influence of linguistic thought. Journal articles demonstrating the applications of linguistics are rare until 1966, when there was another attempt 'to make a go of it'.

This time the announcement was made by Professor Pit Corder and it was published in the first issue of the new *British Journal of Disorders of Communication* - surely an auspicious beginning. He was able to state without fear of dissent:

> "What is perhaps rather remarkable is that so much GOOD language teaching and speech therapy goes on without the practitioners receiving more formal study of language".

He observed that:

> "Until recently the only rigorous study of language undertaken in the schools of speech therapy was that of phonetics".

In my own experience the same comments held good five years later with regard to the education and training field. And with regard to actual practice, I have regretfully to say that it is my impression that the situation reflected in these comments was true of the majority of clinicians ten years later, i.e. through to the mid-1970s; though by then there was a growing minority of exceptions. With regard to research, there were a few journal articles in the late 1960s but no evidence of any sustained research activities and no major publications on clinical linguistics. The penetration of linguistics into speech and language pathology education and eventually into clinical practice only began in earnest in the early 1970s. The UK research effort has only really begun to gather momentum in the 1980s.

The impetus for this development can be attributed at least in part to the publication of a *Report of a Government Committee of Inquiry into Speech Therapy Services* in 1972. The Committee of Inquiry was chaired by Professor Randolph Quirk, then Professor of the English Language at University College London - back to origins again, but the language factor had at last begun to emerge. The Report of the Committee - known as the 'Quirk Report' - contains such statements as:

> 'We envisage the ultimate development of a profession which accepts "language as the central core of a basic discipline".'

> Its recommendations included:

> 'More research should be undertaken by Audiologists, Linguists, Neurologists, Psychologists and others in related disciplines into all aspects of normal and impaired human communication.
>
> Speech therapists should be made more aware of and be better equipped to understand and apply the results of such research'.

In 1972 those recommendations were already being realized in that a whole issue of the *British Journal of Disorders of Communication* was devoted to 'the practical applications of linguistics to the greater understanding and treatment of disorders of spoken language'. I quote from the Editorial written by Betty Byers Brown (who contributed one of the very few papers on language in the clinic, by the way, to the AILA Congress in Cambridge in 1969). The first paper in this 1972 issue of *BJDC* is by David Crystal and has the title: 'The Case of Linguistics - a prognosis'. This is a key article in a benchmark publication in the development of a clinical linguistics so I will quote Crystal's opening remarks to give you a flavour of his arguments for the case of linguistics.

> 'It is sometimes possible to find speech therapists and linguists who are willing to speculate about what an ideal world of "therapeutic linguistics" would look like. I have been collating these observations over the past year or so, for it seems to me that only by being agreed about the hoped-for outcome of the encounter between the two fields can we realistically evaluate what progress has been made so far and lay down practicable guidelines for the future. From what I can gather the ideal seems to consists of seven main goals...'

To summarize briefly I will paraphrase Crystal's list:

1. Description of normal development of language
2. Description of normal adult language
3. Description of linguistic characteristics of language disorders
4. Descriptive techniques for use in particular cases

5. Evaluative scales for linguistic aspects of disorders
6. Explanatory principles for linguistic acquisition and breakdown.
7. Introductory textbook in linguistics

Even at that time (1972) there were at least plenty of general texts to satisfy point 7!!

In this list we have a definitive manifesto for clinical linguistics. It is from this point that the active development of an academic and professional interest in the clinical applications of linguistics can be traced, leading ultimately to the recognition of the specialist field of knowledge and practice - clinical linguistics.

The Quirk Report as well as establishing the need for a study of linguistics in the education and training of speech and language pathologists, also recommended that this education and training should take place in institutions where students would follow a degree course; in other words that British speech therapists should become a graduate profession. The process of conversion literally took a decade: the last old Diploma courses were not finally discontinued and converted into degrees until 1982. These speech and language pathology degree courses are split almost equally between universities and other public sector tertiary education colleges, polytechnics and institutes - awarding degrees that are recognized by universities and the Council for National Academic Awards as being equivalent to those awarded in universities, both in content, level and professional training. The College of Speech Therapists inspects and accredits all these institutions - both universities and polytechnics/colleges - as being suitable training establishments and validates each course as awarding a qualification which grants a licence to practice i.e. a certificate of clinical competence. There are seven courses in universities; five in or associated with polytechnics; three in other types of colleges. Geographically, there are three degree courses and one post graduate diploma in London; in England there are also two degree courses in Manchester and one each in Reading, Birmingham, Sheffield, Newcastle, Leeds and Leicester; two in Scotland and one each in Wales and Northern Ireland. In the university sector three of the courses are run by or under the auspicies of a department of linguistics. All the other courses have linguists - or rather should I say clinical linguists - as members of their course teaching teams. That correction is more than one of terminology these days - it represents a significant change from the situation in the early 1970s when linguistics was first being introduced into the curriculum. At that time it was general practice - as it had been with phonetics teaching - to buy in a lecturer on a visiting basis from the local university to teach linguistics; not surprisingly, this was found to have less than successful results. The unfortunate lecturer usually knew next to nothing about speech and language pathology and as a result his unfortunate students ended his course knowing next to nothing about how to apply linguistics

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in their professional practice.

I was in fact one of the first phonetician/linguists to be appointed to the teaching team of one of the newer courses in a polytechnic in 1971; at that time I was the exception; now such an appointment is literally the rule.

To give an indication of what linguistic knowledge a qualifying speech and language pathologist would be expected to possess I will outline the kinds of compulsory courses in linguistics - or linguistic science so as to encompass phonetics - all the degrees include as standard in their curricula:

Introduction to General Linguistics
Linguistic theories and their clinical relevance with special reference to grammatical theories.
Phonological theories and their clinical relevance
Semantic theories and their clinical relevance
Discourse analysis and its clinical relevance
Detailed study of and practice in the grammatical analysis of English
Detailed study of and practice in articulatory and acoustic phonetics, including instrumental phonetics
Detailed study and practice in the phonetic and phonological analysis of English
Detailed study of and practice in the phonetic, phonological grammatical, semantic and pragmatic analysis and assessment of language disorders
Detailed study of the linguistic aspects of child language development
Psycholinguistics and its clinical relevance (and neuro-linguistics - if you make the distinction)
Sociolinguistics and its clinical relevance.

The amount of time devoted to these topic areas varies considerably from course to course, but one routinely finds up to and sometimes over 100 taught hours per year allocated to the Linguistic Sciences.

In addition, there is considerable emphasis on the importance of clinical linguistics in most of the courses in the core area of speech and language pathology and students are expected to use clinical linguistic techniques as routine in their clinical practice training placements. Many clinical linguistics also contribute to the teaching in this core area, indeed many are dually qualified, having both speech and language pathology and linguistic degrees. In courses where students take specialist options and undertake special studies in addition to the compulsory curriculum, clinical linguistics more often than not features prominently. From this albeit brief outline it will be apparent that linguistics does indeed hold an extremely important and influential place currently in the prepraration of the professional British speech and language pathologist.

The evolution of interest by UK speech and language pathologists in applying linguistics in professional clinical practice itself can be summarized somewhat alliteratively as follows: first the profession was **pre-occupied with pronunciation** - an era which lasted as I have already described up to the early 1970s. In the next era we were **gripped by grammar**, mainly of the Chomskian and Quirkian/Crystalian varieties in whose grasp most of the 1970s passed. Towards the end of that decade and in the early 1980s some of us became **fascinated with functions**; from which positions it has been an easy transition to the present state which finds us **convinced by communication, devoted to discourse and practising pragmatics**.

The early years of this evolutionary progress are not material to the focus of this review except in so far as they left behind them certain legacies. The good legacies of the pre-occupation with pronunciation are a continuing expectation of a high standard of phonetic knowledge and skill in the profession as a whole from the graduate's entry into clinical practice. This includes the ability to transcribe using the entire International Phonetic Alphabet and additional symbols to represent deviant speech features. Therefore clinical phonological assessment tools are devised on the assumption that their users will possess the ability to make narrow phonetic transcriptions and will have a very detailed knowledge of articulatory phonetics, normal English pronunciation, normal phonetic and phonological development of English-speaking children and abnormal phonetic and phonological characteristics of different types of speech and language disorders. The somewhat less welcome legacies are a public image which still persists in some quarters to this day of speech therapists; and a generation gap in the profession between those with no knowledge of linguistics and those with an ever-increasing understanding of the concepts and applications of linguistics.

............And thus they were - at least until quite recently - in the grip of grammar. As seems to be inevitably the pattern with revolutions, speech and language pathologists were taken by storm and swung violently over to the language side of the speech-language dichotomy during the mid-1970s. One assessment procedure began to dominate, certainly in the practice of therapy for children's language disorders: this is *LARSP - Language Assessment Remediation and Screening Procedure* - devised by Crystal, Fletcher and Garman, first published in 1976. This became the preeminent clinical linguistic tool: used for assessment and defining treatment goals for language therapy - as I said mainly for children, but also, though less widely, for adult clients with acquired aphasia.

LARSP is essentially a developmental profile of the grammatical structures of English. As an assessment procedure it is designed for use with spontaneous language samples which are then analysed grammatically and the occurrence of the different structures are plotted on the chart. From this profile the clinician can assess the client's grammatical abilities and identify which grammatical structures are absent and the order in which they should be introduced in a remediation programme based on the developmental order of emergence. The focus on grammatical structures naturally led to a similar focus on structures in treatment. Language games and indeed drills were designed to provide opportunities to introduce and practice grammatical structures mainly in a rather rigid and structured way. In 1979 detailed descriptions of how this approach to language remediation had been applied successfully in a variety of settings were published in a volume entitled *Working with LARSP*. The settings included two residential schools for language disabled children, group therapy for pre-school language disabled children and language therapy programs in a partially hearing unit. This volume presents a very clear statement of the current state of the applications of clinical linguistics in professional practice at the end of the 1970s: at least in regard to the treatment of child language disorders.

Linguistic approaches to adult language disorders - i.e. acquired aphasia - also became established in the late 1970s - but from a much wider perspective. This development can in part be attributed to the publication of Ruth Lesser's review volume: *Linguistic Investigations of Aphasia*. This book takes an eclectic approach to aphasia from the theoretical linguistic point of view. Perhaps its main function with hindsight was to ensure that the linguistics characteristics of aphasia were at last as a matter of routine clinical practice described accurately in linguistic terms. This in turn led to the development of informal linguistic assessment tools and linguistic approaches to the treatment of people with acquired speech and language disorders.

Given the dominance of grammatical analysis it is not surprising that clinical phonology was virtually completely overshadowed during the 1970s. Until that is towards the end of that decade when in 1979 a national group of what we would now call clinical linguists got together to devise conventions for the phonetic representation of disordered speech. This by the way was no backlash against the grammatical revolution; more part of the natural evolutionary process of building up a set of clinically applicable linguistic and phonetic tools and procedures for the researcher and the clinical practitioner. At the same time and continuing to the present day related work in clinical phonetics was in train. This includes the development of the clinical applications of Laver's Vocal Profile Analysis technique and various instrumental techniques including electrolaryngography and electropalatography (see Code and Ball (1984)).

In the latter half of the 1970s, new approaches to grammatical analysis were filtering through to clinical linguistics, especially via child language research. These approaches involved a functional analysis of utterances and their syntactic structure: the names of Michael Halliday and Gordon Wells are particularly associated with these developments. The functional approach introduced into the clinical field the analysis of the textual and interpersonal functions of utterances in discourse - highlighting whether an utterance is dependent on preceding utterances and examining its affective intent with regard to the person to whom it is addressed. In addition the functional approach described the grammatical structures within an utterance in terms of their semantic relationship to each other. These concepts are particularly appropriate in investigating communication disorders in that they can be related directly to breakdowns in conversational exchanges on the one hand and on the other to the cognitive knowledge that is required to formulate or comprehend linguistic meanings.

While some of the basic ideas of this functional approach were applied by a few clinicians, I think that it would be true to say that in the early 1980s its impact unfortunately remained relatively small. Now, however, these approaches are coming more to the fore as they are perceived to have a close relationship to the current trend towards pragmatic language therapy. In fact an assessment procedure based on a functional analysis was published by David Crystal in 1982. This is known as *PRISM-G: Profile in Semantics* - focussing on grammatico- semantic relationships. There is also *PRISM-L: Profile in Semantics* focussing on lexico-semantic relationships. As with so many assessment procedures, these two profiles are taking several years to become known and used by the practising professionals. We are also promised very soon a new profile of language development based on the work of Gordon Wells: this profile will be functionally based; its pilot version is called the *Bristol Scale of Language Development.*

Undoubtedly the most rapidly developing area of interest is pragmatics and allied with this studies of the discourse characteristics of therapeutic interactions. Consideration of pragmatic factors is penetrating all aspects of clinical work: assessment, diagnosis and treatment. Furthermore, this approach to language disorders is finding expression in clinical speech and language pathology for both child and adult clients. I think that it is important to view the growing interest in therapeutic discourse alongside the current emergence of pragmatics. In order to implement a pragmatic approach to therapy we must have a very highly developed awareness of the characteristics of facilitative discourse. These are developments in the making to which I will turn in the prospective selection of my paper.

What of clinical linguistic research in the past two decades? The first point to bear in mind in this regard is the history of the profession - its training and qualifications. Only very recently have degrees in speech pathology been awarded as the only qualification to practice. This means that the possibility of post-graduate study has also only recently become generally available. Although post-graduate - i.e. taught Masters - courses have been in existence since the early 1970s there were very few available - basically only two in London until the present decade. Therefore very few clinicians embarked upon post-qualification studies. Higher degrees by research were virtually non- existent until recently. However, rapid changes are afoot as clinicians perceive the significance of their own graduate professional status as equipping them to conduct research on an equal footing with their professional colleagues in other disciplines. Thus research in the academic sense is in its infancy, but this is not to suggest that there has been no research until the present time. Research in the sense of innovations in clinical practice has been regularly reported in the *British Journal of Disorders of Communication* and elsewhere. Up-to-date statements of clinical research have now found new and regular outlets in the journal *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*; and for adult disorders *Aphasiology*; and from this year - a landmark in the development of the subject area - the new journal of *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics*.

What are the major areas of research that are currently being explored in the UK which have a clinical linguistic orientation? Grammatical assessment procedures are still a focus of concern with the refinement of the *Bristol Scale of Language Development* and the standardization of *LARSP* by Fletcher and Garman.

Various aspects of discourse are being explored by a number of individuals and small teams, focussing in particular on:

1. The interactions both verbal and non-verbal between mothers and their language-handicapped children.
2. The discourse structure and strategies used by therapists interacting with language handicapped children.

There are a number of projects concentrating on aspects of clinical phonology and phonological therapy. These include investigations attempting to define the nature of phonetic and phonological disorder; investigations of the characteristics of phonologically disordered speech; investigations of phonological development in cleft palate children; research into defining and evaluating strategies in phonological therapy. Although on a smaller scale, the same range of research interest exists in clinical linguistics as applied to the field of acquired disorders. In addition there is considerable and growing interest in the applications of Information Technology in the clinical field: including the development of computerised assessment procedures - *LARSP* already has been computerised; a computerised version of my own phonological assessment *PACS* is currently being developed; clinical data bases are being constructed to aid identification of significant diagnostic factors and predictors of positive response to therapy; remedial software packages are also being developed for use with specific client groups.

All in all it is my impression that British Clinical Linguistics has never been in such vigorous health.

And what of its prognosis - to echo Crystal's metaphor of 1972? For the foreseeable future, I cannot see any prospect of the importance of the linguistic sciences in clinical speech and language pathology being eroded or down-valued. There is no doubt that it will continue to form a major element in the initial undergraduate training programmes. As a result clinical linguistics as an essential element in clinical practice will become even more firmly established, widely practised and developed to a higher level of clinical relevance. And provided that the current trend towards the building-up of a research base in the discipline is sustained then these developments in training and practice will be supported by an increasing understanding of the linguistic nature of speech and language disorders and the potential contributions of clinical linguistics to their clinical management.

What then are the aims and purposes of clinical linguistics? My own personal view is that a clinically applicable linguistics should aim to satisfy the pourposes of its specific users: i.e. clinicians and clinical researchers, (often one and the same person). In so doing it should not be hidebound by the theoretical models of mainstream linguistics, but if necessary should be theoretically eclectic and thereby potentially innovative. In this way clinical linguistics should aspire to produce clinically applicable assessment procedures that provide insights into the characteristics and inherent nature of disordered speech and language patterns. Detailed and comparable linguistic descriptions of the different types of speech and language disorders are required: this will provide the data base for the identification of linguistic typologies and diagnostic categories based on linguistic descriptions, (which could of course then be related to other speech pathological characteristics). On the basis of these clearly stated descriptions explicit criteria can be formulated for the identifying and selecting of treatment aims. Equally, therapeutic procedures can be motivated and explicitly determined by the linguistic descriptions of the speech and language disorders. On the basis of such explicitly stated principles and rationales for intervention the evaluation of the efficacy of therapy is made more explicit and explicable. Clinical linguistics can thus serve the theoretical needs of speech and language pathology in contributing to explanations of the nature of disordered communication and the professional requirements of speech and language pathologists in helping clients to overcome their communication disorders.

At the same time as serving the needs of professional practitioners clinical linguists are also seeking to develop and clarify the premises and procedures of their own discipline. In this regard it is unfortunate that David Crystal should republish in paperback his benchmark review of *Clinical Linguistics* this year without his being allowed to revise substantively the contents of the original 1981 version. In the last five years there have been emerging some very clear lines of development in clinical linguistics which I think are indicative of significant differences in our appreciation of the relevance and indeed the premises of clinical linguistics.

The debate has focused on the **explanatory status** of clinical linguistic descriptions of communication disorders. The arguments have been most publicly and explicitly rehearsed in regard to phonetic and phonological disorders, especially through a series of linked papers in the *BJDC* Volume 20, 1985. But they are also shared by clinical linguists who concentrate on grammatical and semantic disorders. I shall spend the rest of this review exploring my own perception of this debate as an indication of the future prospects for the development of clinical linguistics. While this will be a personal view, it is also a reflection of the general concern of the majority of British clinical linguists as represented in the new journal *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics* and in papers presented at recent international conferences, especially *AFASIC First International Symposium on Specific Speech and Language Disorders in Children* (Reading April 1987) and *IASCL Fourth International Congress for the Study of Child Language* (Lund, Sweden July 1987) where surprisingly the largest single section of free papers was that on Child Language Disorders.

In the early stages of the development of the clinical applications of linguistics, both clinical linguists and clinicians made bold claims about the explanatory powers of linguistic analysis: the linguistic descriptions of communication disorders were taken, at their face-value, as explanations. Because the data of communication disorders were amenable to a certain type of linguistic analysis, it was claimed that the nature of the disorder was characterized by the linguistic description. Thus a person was said to have for example a **phonological disorder** when their pronunciation patterns were systematically different from those of the norms of his language community. These norm-based explanations of disorders typify what Nigel Hewlett (in *BJDC*, Volume 20, 1985) has recently termed 'the data-orientated viewpoint' in contrast to a 'speaker-orientated viewpoint' in which a psycholinguistic explanation of the actual processes involved in the person's production of spoken language is sought. Before I proceed to considering the implications of adopting a speaker-orientated viewpoint however, there are other bases of clinical linguistic explanations that need to be examined.

One of the classical measures of severity of a disorder in speech and language pathology is **intelligibility** - or the relative ease or difficulty representative listeners find in understanding different individuals with disordered speech and language. It is therefore not surprising to find that one range of approaches to the explanation of communication disorders that is currently being developed by some clinical linguists reflects this traditional type of clinical evaluation. These approaches involve the devising of objective techniques of evaluating the functional consequences of disordered speech and language, by measuring for example the amount of homophony resulting from the loss of a phonemic contrast (Eeva Leinonen-Davies 1987), or the amount of ambiguity entailed by the failure to signal a grammatical structure. A collection of some of the papers from the BAAL Seminar on Clinical Linguistics held at Leicester last Easter, (Grunwell & James 1988), will represent this line of development and take the debate further into the area of treatment implications. While this type of explanation is like the norm-reference descriptions and assessments in that it is based directly on the **data** of the disorders, the functional evaluation can be justified as being closer to an explanatory account in that it pinpoints the aspects of the disordered use of language that are responsible for the relative difficulties speakers and listeners experience in achieving effective communication.

Another current and well-developed approach employed in applying linguistics in the investigation of the nature of children's language disorders is to attempt to explain the speech and language problems by reference to developmental norms. When a child is found to be performing differently from his peer group in his use and/or comprehension of language, then a linguistic description and a comparison of his language with that of his peer group and of younger children enables the clinician/clinical linguist to identify whether his language development is:

delayed but otherwise normal
uneven, in that there are patterns from a number of different normal stages
deviant, in that there are patterns that are different from any known normal patterns.

The explanatory outcome of such investigations is a face-value statement that the child has a **developmental** language disorder. Once again, however, this explanation is based on the data or the 'product' of the process of language development; it is thus derived from another essentially data-orientated viewpoint. In order to move towards a speaker-orientated approach we need to ask questions about the process of language development itself, and the physiological and psychological processes and mechanisms that underlie progress through that process.

This is the direction in which clinical linguistics is beginning to move. There is growing recognition among clinical linguists that linguistic descriptions are not in themselves self-sufficient but are **contributions** towards clinically relevant explanations. Clinical explanations require an intermeshing of all the factors that impinge upon a person's communication development, performance and maintenance. The same type of linguistic disorder, in terms of the descriptive account of its characteristics, may be accounted for by several different constellations of clinical factors, including physiological, psychological and social dimensions. In diagnosing the nature of a person's disorder and devising appropriate treatment strategies, the clinician needs to take into consideration all of these factors alongside the linguistic description of the disorder and the functional evaluation of its consequences.

As I have already indicated a clear appreciation of this role of clinical linguistics is now emerging. This I believe can only serve to reinforce its value both in clinical practice and in research. Therefore I look forward to our achieving over the next ten years that intermeshing of Clinical Linguistics and Speech Pathology, that our present chairperson John Trim envisaged in the programme he mapped out for this area of applied linguistics in 1963.

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SOME PAWNS FOR KINGMAN: LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND ENGLISH TEACHING

Ronald Carter
University of Nottingham Department of English Studies

Introduction

My aims in this paper are to examine some features of the current debate surrounding English teaching in this country, and to try to explain why it has something of the character it has. To do this, I have spent time reading and re-reading books and government reports on English teaching going back to the Newbolt Report of 1921. I have given particular attention to books which a survey I recently undertook showed to be the most core text books used in English curriculum and methods courses for P.G.C.E. and B.Ed. pre-service teachers. For applied linguists, even for those like myself with a literary background and who teach literature in a University English department, it makes depressing reading. Books on language do *not* figure at all prominently. This should, however, come as no surprise for opposition between language and literature teaching has a long history.

The other points I wish to make are as follows:

(i) Detailed examination of the current aims and objectives of English teachers is an essential prerequisite to any consideration of the terms of reference of the Kingman committee. This will necessarily involve some historical reflections, since the ideologies underlying aims and objectives are determined or at least shaped in specific historical contexts.

(ii) Applied linguists do not generally seem to engage directly with these aims and objectives, or with their historical shadowings when they write about English language education, language awareness programmes, stylistics and the teaching of literature, and so on. In fact, a main point throughout this paper is that applied linguists committed to a higher profile for language in English teaching, need to show greater understanding of what is important to English teachers. Failure to understand, or at least, to engage with such positionings will mean that arguments for a greater linguistic underpinning to the subject, and to the training of teachers for the subject, fail to carry conviction because they do not deal with central issues.

(iii) It is only by powerful *arguments* that shifts in attitude and orientation take place. It may be in itself naive to believe this, but it is at least my observation that the HMI discussion documents *English 5-16* were generally weak in argumentation, particularly in anticipating counter-arguments. The result was what came to be seen by many people as a retreat, or at best, a beleaguered position concerning a more central place for language in the English classroom. If recommendations made by the Kingman committee peter out through lack of resources, that would be disappointing; but it would not be as disappointing as failing to carry conviction and losing the argument for more langauge-based work. The counter-arguments English teachers will invariably mount have to be anticipated by careful study of their underlying philosophies.

Romantics and Reactionaries

What, then, are some of the main objectives, ideologies and curricular philosophies which underly such a highly contested term as 'English'? Two main categories can be identified as far as current philosophies of English teaching are concerned: 'Romantics' and 'Reactionaries'. The romantic camp is in the majority. The reactionaries are probably the more vociferous, at least, in certain places such as the pages of many national newspapers (and especially in letters to *The Radio Times*), but I hope to show that the romantics are in some respects more dangerous.

'Romantics' and 'Reactionaries' are, of course, not exclusive categories, but rather tendencies or orientations. Along such a cline most applied linguists would probably occupy a position somewhere in the middle of these two poles. It is, however, as I have already pointed out, a position which has only been tentatively and temporarily occupied. Linguists should be in little doubt, however, that for many English teachers, they are unequivocably in the reactionary camp. On the other hand, for those holding reactionary views of English teaching, linguists are often seen as irredeemably romantic, capable of only the most laissez-faire attitudes to language, and culpable of the most anarchic forms of relativism.[1]

In this paper I intend to attempt to characterise these opposing tendencies, particularly with regard to views of language, in the following general terms. With regard to **reactionary** views, we find:

(i) A prescriptive view of language which manifests itself in a concern with grammatical correctness, accurate spelling and punctuation, and so on. Pedagogically, such a view would be accompanied by regular tests and exercises in the correct forms with a heavy reliance on memorization as a learning procedure, and on copying and dictation. A comic version of such prescriptivism is Keith Waterhouses's witty remark that he would die a happy man if the Kingman committee could prevent his greengrocer from putting apostrophes in potato's, tomato's, orange's and so on.

(ii) Underlying this view is a belief that language can and should be stabilized and codified as a series of rules to be followed and to be taught accordingly.

(iii) An essentially historical view of language and social reality. The above concern with order and organisation also represents a resistance to change in

> language. This in turn leads to a static, synoptic, product-centred perspective regarding language and language use. The position is particularly well characterised in Milroy and Milroy (1985) *Authority in Language*. Connected with this is a general lack of tolerance of linguistic variation, including dialectal, and a commitment to the idea of a single homogeneous *standard* English. Given that written English is generally more resistant to change, there is a pedagogical focus on writing development, and on acquisition of written norms; there is much less attention given to oral competence and oracy in general.

The Newbolt Report of 1921 is particularly characterised by reactionaryism, as can be seen from the quotations below. We should also note that a resistance to change and a desire for linguistic homogeneity (irrespective of the facts of diversity) simultaneously embodies a *socially* reactionary adherence to keeping things the way they are. Views of language and views of social reality are never very far apart, but, above all, this position is worth noting for it is one which is particularly markedly at odds with the social philosophies of those teachers who embrace romantic views of the nature of English teaching.

> "We state what appears to us to be an incontrovertible primary fact, that for English children no form of knowledge can take precedence over a knowledge of English, no form of literature can take precedence of English Literature: and that the two are so inextricably connected as to form the only basis possible for a national education.
>
> [There should be]...systematic training in the use of standard English, to secure clearness and correctness both in oral expression and in writing
>
> In France, we are told, this pride in the national language is strong and universal...such feeling for our own native language would be a bond of union between classes, and would beget the right kind of national pride. Even more certainly should pride and joy in the national literature serve as such a bond."
>
> (*The Newbolt Report (1921)*, pp.14-22)

Let us turn now to an examination of more **romantic** curricular philosophy of English teaching. An archetypal expression of this is in the following extract from a widely cited book by Peter Medway:

> "Although English may well have introduced into the curriculum certain important topics which would not have got there under the programmes of the other subjects, it is not the topic-list that gives English its identity, but the sort of knowledge that is involved *within* the topics. English is about working on the knowledge we have acquired from the unsystematic processes of living, about giving expression to it and making it into a firmer and more conscious kind of knowledge. This is done through language, expressive and informal language in the first place, and eventually language akin to that of

literature. Our students work through language on their own knowledge, and also gain access to other people's knowledge by way of their language, that is, through literature: we learn from literature in something like the way we do from working over our own experience.

The fact that it is literature that provides the model for the expression of knowledge in English, brings us to another of the distinctive features of that knowledge. A chemistry teacher embarking on a topic with a class will usually be able to specify what the detailed content of the work will be and what learning is expected to result. For the English teacher, the detailed content, since a large part of it will come from the students, is unpredictable, and so, therefore, is the resulting learning. But quite apart from the unpredictability, even if English teachers wanted to specify the knowledge they hoped would result, they would be unable to. The sort of knowledge that is involved is not specifiable. That is why there are no English textbooks - in the sense of books which lay out the knowledge which the subject is centrally about. Other teachers can give a statement of what they want the students to know: the task then is, in a sense, to make that statement into a psychological awareness in the student. But what students end up knowing, as a result of their English work, about, say people's motiviations, could never be set out as a series of propositions; instead, it would have to be revealed by the way, for instance, they handle characters in their stories. The knowledge can only be displayed by being brought to bear on particular real or imagined situations - as happens in literature.

Thus the knowledge which is handled in English is of a different kind from that which is explicitly taught in the other subjects and enshrined in their formulas, facts and texts."

(*Finding a Language: Autonomy and Learning in School* (1980)

This quotation illustrates the first of seven observations I want to make about romanticism:

(i) A Subject with no Knowledge Content

English is a subject without any specifiable content. In English lessons there is no knowledge to be imparted to children; instead children come *to* the knowledge, of their own accord as it were. If the knowledge had to be quantified, then it would have to be by reference to experiential knowledge, the development of a knowledge of life. The pedagogic outcomes of such a position are a widespread refusal to contemplate the possibility of a syllabus for English.

(ii) English as an Art not a Science

English is by definition opposed to science. Science is seen as dealing with *facts* and therefore, as having a determinable knowledge content. Scientific subjects are seen as essentially mechanistic and anti-creative. (This is, of course, a fallacious view of science which is a process of creative hypothesis building and hypothesis modification with no ultimately verifiable 'facts'; however, such is the established view of science adopted by English teachers). This view of English explains the failure of English teachers to develop 'language across the curriculum' projects of the kind proposed by the Bullock Report (1975). Most English teachers unconsciously resist the notion that they should in any way assume a servicing role, especially to scientific subjects.

(iii) Anti-Formalization

Related to both the above positions is an opposition to technicality or formalization. There will thus be a strong aversion to what is seen as the 'metalanguage' or jargon of linguistics and language-based discussion. (This is, of course, an untenable position since English literary studies are redolent with terms such as rhyme, iambic pentameter, omniscient narrator, and the like. This is a simple case of metalanguages being naturalised in one's own subject area - jargon is always somebody else's jargon, - but this does not mean that anti-formalization is not a very prevalent attitude among English teachers). Rules, technical terms and the like are associated with scientific discourse and are to be avoided lest they impose 'mind-forged manacles' on children and possibly hinder their personal growth. Such avoidance suggests some reasons for the lack of enthusiasm for the teaching of grammar with its associated rules and terminologies.

(iv) Individualism

Individuals and individualism are central to Romantic ideologies. As the reference to 'mind-forged manacles' in the previous section demonstrates (a much-used quotation from the Romantic poet, William Blake), there should be no conformity to rules or to the requirements of a social organization and especially so if that social organization is in any way connected with commercial or business interests. Individual pupils cannot be in any way constrained as individuals. They must not become cogs in a production line.

The pedagogic outcomes of the general positions outlined at (iii) and (iv) above, are as follows: an emphasis on creative writing, rather than on pre-formulation; a concern for children to write in their own words, and to choose the language and forms they require for individual expression. There will be greater attention to writing as a process in which there is minimal structural intervention by a teacher. Such pedagogies are essentially child-centred with children making their own meanings as individual creative beings, and as far as possible, in their own words. The possible dangers of childism inherent in this particular position will be outlined later.

(v) Dualization of Language and Meaning

The strong belief in this connection is again an essentially Romantic one. It is that language is preceded by content; that is, ideas originate independently of forms of expression and ultimately shape the choices of language and form needed to convey those ideas. In this view, then, language is only a channel, a conduit for the transmission of meanings. Such a view manifests itself in metaphors such as: *put into words*; *get your thoughts across*; *the statement was impenetrable*; the sentence was *filled with emotion.* Ideas are objects and words are merely the containers for them. Language is thus packed with ideas and sent down the conduit to a hearer.

The pedagogic consequences here are an emphasis in teaching on *what* is said, rather than on how it is said. Individually distinctive content takes precedence over the linguistic organization and structuring of content. This view of a dualization of language and meaning leads to classroom practices which presume that students who have difficulties with writing are actually struggling to make sense of content, rather than struggling to develop the language necessary to achieve an appropriate mastery of that content.

(vi) Independence of Language and Cognition

Many teachers share the attitudes of the wider community in this regard, viewing student's mental capacities and abilities as independent from the patterns of language in which these abilities are expressed. There is a tendency to look *beyond* or *past* language, as it were; teachers tend to imagine that independently-operating cognitive abilities control the ways students perform in school, and that these abilities by their nature cannot change. There is a clear connection here with the previous observation concerning the relationship between language and content; the pedagogic outcome is an unwillingness to provide pupils with the linguistic means to undertake particular cognitive tasks. Those pupils that can do it, it is assumed, are able to do so because they can do it, not because they have or have not got the means to do it.

(vii)Literature as a resource

Ezra Pound argued that literature was a way of keeping words living and accurate: English teachers, too, are concerned with the emotional, imaginative and 'spiritual' development of the pupil. They are engaged in exploring and manipulating the blossoming inter-dependence of reading, talking, listening and writing:

> Reading, writing, talking about writing and talking in order to write, must be continual possibilities: they overlap and interlock[1].

The confidence in the modes of language which good teachers of English generate in their pupils, enables them to 'know' the world and themselves more completely. Kafka commented:

> 'A book or a poem must be an ice-axe to break the sea frozen inside us'
>
> "If you accept the fundamental truth beyond this startling image, it is clear that English is deeply concerned with the aesthetic, the creative and the spiritual. Moreover, we are responsible for helping to develop within pupils the ability to participate sympathetically and constructively in society. This must involve an understanding of political, social and ethical issues and, most importantly, the ability to 'use' languages with confidence - in order to learn, communicate and exploit life to its full."
> (*Writing and the Writer*, Frank Smith, 1982)[1]
> from Richard Knott - *The English Department in a Changing World (1985)*

The centrality of literature as a resource is the cornerstone of Romantic philosophy in so far as it affects the English classroom. This is illustrated in the above quotation. Indeed, as Raymond Williams reminds us in *Keywords*[2] the use of the term literature is a romantic invention which is still prevalent today. In the eighteenth century, the word literature was used to refer to writing in the broadest sense of the word: diaries, essays, travelogues, etc. The sense is retained today in phrases such as travel or insurance 'literature'. Its romantic, nineteenth century meaning is of texts highly valued for their originality and creativity, and for their expression of a unique vision. It can be seen that the high value placed on literariness in writing, affects the kind of writing which pupils are expected to produce in schools and which is, in turn, positively regarded by their English teachers.

Literature, then, is a resource in which feeling and imagination find expression. It is also a repository of values greatly prized for their potential civilizing effects; it is a resource beyond the merely functional, instrumental and utilitarian. It is instead a resource for the development of imaginative, emotional, spiritual and even moral capacities. Above all, it fosters a critical perspective on existing social and ideological practices. Powerful literary texts are, either implicitly or explicitly, profoundly critical of societal structures, and of the value systems which support or are, in turn, supported by them. And the word critical here embraces both positive and negative senses.

The pedagogies which result from this view of the centrality of literature will not be difficult to discern. They include: a limited generic range of writing in the English classroom, and a corresponding paucity of engagement with non-literary discourses. A marked focus is on the writing of stories and of narratives of personal experience in particular. For example, my own son (aged nine) produced thirty-four pieces of written work last year in his junior school. Of these, thirty-two were narratives of personal experience. Of the remaining two, one was a report and the other a letter; both of these were heavily based on narrative organization. At more advanced levels, the institutionalization of the subject, for example, at 'A' level, is that of a study of literary texts. In the 'A' level curriculum it will probably not surprise anyone to learn that the most widely studied paper is *English Literature 1790-1830: English Romantic Poets*. The wheel comes full circle.

I shall conclude this all too brief discussion of the impregnation of English teaching in this country with Romantic-idealist philosophies by quoting one of the clearest expressions of it which I have recently encountered. The quotation is taken from the annual address to N.A.T.E. this year (1987) by its Chairperson, Henrietta Dombey. The talk, which merits much fuller study, is reprinted, in part, in *Times Educational Supplement* (1.5.87):

> "It is hardly surprising that teachers of English are an irritant to government. Whether we take a Leavisite stance on the civilizing value of literature, see English as primarily concerned with personal growth, or treat both language and literature as cultural phenomena through which the structures of society can be explored, we are clearly not in the business of teaching our pupils to be obedient workers, docile citizens and eager consumers.
>
> Instead, we are primarily concerned with putting our pupils in charge of their own lives. Learning to be sensitive to the ways others use language, which means, in part, to recognize manipulation, deception and coercion, and thus to protect our pupils from exploitation. Active reading of powerful literary texts which pupils can relate in some way to their own experience, enlarges their understanding of the world and its possibilities. Using their own language in speech and writing, with effectiveness, imagination and a sensitivity to the needs of the situation, enables pupils to refine their thoughts, experiences and intentions, and to make these clear to themselves and others. The teaching of English is powerful stuff."

This is, in essence, an expression of Romantic values. Like many Romantic values, it imparts an importance to all who profess them. It embraces English teachers as sensitive rebels, as custodians of individuality against impersonalizing forces, as the instillers of civilizing and of critical capacities. Who would not like to be in possession of such powerful stuff, and who would not want to resist such powers being removed and being replaced by a linguistic utilitarianism as it is feared the Kingman committee may intend?

The main problem, for me, with such a profession, is that it comes close to saying English teachers can teach anything. This is in paradoxical contrast to the objections raised by English teachers to the statement that 'all teachers are teachers of English'. The dangers of English teachers playing many different tunes, has been pointed out perceptively by Michael Stubbs in an article published in 1982. Stubbs argues that models of English teaching:

> "...appear to make English teachers responsible not only for the linguistic

> development of their pupils, but also for their psychological, moral and interpersonal development - and to expect them also to provide a world view and a philosophy of life."[3]

The view of English teaching as psychotherapy, social criticism, uniquely individual creative expression, the repository of civilized values, as well as of language development, leaves many applied linguists bewildered. But, if a more linguistic view is to become prevalent, it is clearly essential for this romantically-orientated view to be understood and to be argued with or against. It cannot be either dismissed or assumed not to exist. If there is to be a sufficient curricular space for a properly coherent English language education, English teachers must feel that it is worth doing. For it to have worth, such work must be recognized to square in some respect with their existing concerns. It must embrace romantic ideologies without in any way appearing to proclaim reactionary positions either in 'content' or methodology.

Ways Forward: Developments in Curricular Genres

I will turn now to two recent developments:

1. Australian work on genre and curricular genres
2. Recent developments in 'A' level English language

which may offer some grounds for optimism, and which may provide a way in which language education can move forward. The first development touches on relevant models of language in education through English; the second development touches on the kind of language study which may be appropriate in schools - both developments thus fall within the Kingman committee brief.

I want to argue that there *is* potential for a synthesis between the extreme positions of romantics and reactionaries, which still establishes and enunciates clear working and defensible principles. I want to argue that what is required is an approach to language which recognises and reconciles two main complementary features:

- the potential of language for creativity and for the generation of critical and personal meanings;
- the systematic regularity of its patterns

I shall begin with genre research. First I must point out, that research in this domain in Australia, often properly involving linguist and teacher, is extensively funded at state and government levels. The arguments about the teaching of grammar, so strident here, have long since passed in Australia. The understanding there is that grammar is only part of meaning. If it is only taught in isolated sentences and not as part of connected text, and if it is not related to semantic options, then, it is no wonder Australian teachers of English point out, research is inconclusive concerning the effects of grammar on writing performance.

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By *genre* is meant what Professor Michael Halliday calls 'staged, purposive, goal-directed language activity'. There are spoken and written genres, but most of the descriptive work which proposes lexical, syntactic and discoursal recognition criteria, has been on written curricular genres. Examples of curricular genres are: narrative, argumentation, summary, report, exposition recount, description.

There is still much research to be done. For example, research is needed to find out exactly what are the predominant genres used in business, industry, public service, and trades union contexts. And there is still much descriptive work required, especially at the inter- sentential, discoursal levels of generic organisation, though much revealing and encouraging work is going on as part of the Joint Matriculation Board-funded SAIL project at the University of Manchester, as well as much relevant research in ESP text analysis by John Swales and others. But we are now at a position where teachers can begin to be helped to recognise the different degrees of linguistic organization of different genres and can use such recognition in their teaching if they can be persuaded to do so. How can they be persuaded? What sort of arguments have to be presented? How might the Kingman committee have to make such a case? I feel that, at least, the following arguments need to be mounted: The first point to have to make is that descriptive analysis and the provision of appropriate linguistic descriptive frameworks is for *teachers*, not for pupils. Pupils only get exposure to these analytical models if it is the teacher's judgement that they should. It is up to the teachers to devise appropriatee pedagogies to allow pupils to acquire the requisite generic competence. This kind of language development does definitely require teacher-intervention, but it does not mean a return to prescriptive didactic teaching with a teacher-centred transmissive imparting of rules.

Secondly, children do not generally learn generic knowledge that is, how to write a report or construct an argument, for themselves. It is not knowledge they come to. Of course, some children will learn genres for themselves, by a kind of osmosis. These will usually be the bright middle-class children. English teachers have to recognise that it is insufficient to leave such work in the hands of careers-teachers (many of whom are inappropriately trained) and that a romantic Wordsworthian *childism* inheres in, as is frequently the case, focusing exclusively on experiential genres such as narrative in the belief that children are not ready (until the fourth or fifth year of secondary school) for other kinds of generic writing. A belief in the dualization of content and linguistic form, and of the separability of language and cognition can lead very easily to a dangerous assumption that children are not cognitively capable of such knowledge, let alone of the linguistic skills which accompany them.

Thirdly, by not teaching a wider range of genres, large numbers of children are being *disempowered*. They are being denied access to what Bernstein now

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terms a set of 'coding orientations' without which they cannot hope to compete on equal terms for jobs which require this kind of comprehensive discursive practice. By focusing in such narrow generic terms, children are being denied access to the kinds of social power that comes with articulacy in a range of written styles, especially in argumentation, and in factual expository writing. English teachers have to be convinced that there is little point in providing English lessons in the development of critical social analysis if pupils are simultaneously denied access to language skills which might enable them to change social realities for themselves and for others. Much current English teaching practice is disempowering. It is done unconsciously, with the very best of Romantic motives, but it is still disempowering.

Fourth, the importance for English teachers of children's *choice* in the expression of meanings and of the development of appropriate facilitating pedagogies, has to be respected. But the argument has to be that romanticism is leading to a restriction of choice, for, however rich the meanings a narrative can release, it cannot equal the sum of the meanings made available by other genres. In a related way, too, it can be argued that expressivity involves manipulation of rules - particularly at the highest levels of creativity. Knowledge of the rules has to precede the creative exploitation of them. One of the many Romantic fallacies is that creativity takes place in a vacuum. The throes of creation or whenever the moment takes you, be it at 4 o'clock in the morning, or whenever, cannot only be related to the 'accidental' arrival of the man from Porlock. The very existence of many drafts through which creative work passes is testimony to its being highly structured.

Fifth, the development of generic competence in pupils can and should be organically related to *literary* text study. This is a relatively straightforward matter, since genre is a literary concept and will be understood in such terms by English teachers. In order to be sensitive to the relationship between literariness and genre, it is important to emphasise to teachers a clear recognition that genres are rooted in an historical, evolutionary framework. Genres change and evolve. They are dynamic, rather that static, categories; they lend themselves to creative embedding (especially in literary texts), and to patterned reformulation. But they are also fundamentally instances of languages being systematically patterned. They occupy a curricular space between reactionaryism and romanticism: between language as a creative resource and language as patterned regularity.

Developments in English Language 'A' Level

For many years, English 'A' level meant an advanced level course in English Literature. Things are changing, and three examination boards (AEB, JMB and University of London), now offer an 'A' level in English Language Studies.

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Such courses are gaining rapidly in popularity, and it is worth exploring some of the reasons for this, particularly since language study has not previously been noted for its broad appeal to students and teachers of English. To do so will also hopefully be to reveal interesting points of comparison with arguments for increased attention to the category of genre in the English curriculum.

It may, however, be instructive first of all to compare language study from different periods, since historical reflections are always revealing. Compare, for example, the following two questions: one from a General Secondary Education paper in 1946, the other from a G.C.E. 'A' Level English Language paper forty years later. Both papers are from the University of London Board.

Question 1

(a) Analyse into clauses the following passage.
Give the grammatical description of the clauses and show their connection with each other:

> In that year (1851) when the Great Exhibition spread its hospitable glass roof high over the elms of Hyde Park, and all the world came to *admire* England's wealth, progress and enlightenment, there might *profitably* have been another 'exhibition' to show how our poor were housed and to teach the admiring foreign visitors *some* of the dangers *that* beset the path of the vaunted new era.

(b) State the grammatical features of the words italicized in (a).

Question 2

In February 1984 all the national daily newspapers reported an incident which occurred at a colliery in Northumberland. The participants involved were the chairman of the National Coal Board (Mr. Ian MacGregor), miners and policemen.

The following reports from four of the daily papers deal with the same events, but are contrasted in their interpretation of what took place, and offer their readers different impressions.

(i) Examine and discuss the language of the reports in terms of their choices of vocabulary and grammar, and in the ordering of the events described. Relate these choices to the differences of interpretation presented by the papers, with reference to both the headlines and the reports.

(ii) Discuss some of the problems which may arise in 'reporting the facts' of a news item accurately and impartially. Say which of the reports seems to you to be prejudiced either for or against any of the participants, referring in detail to the linguistic evidence for your judgements. Discuss at least three reports in some detail.

Space allows only a limited number of observations. The first paper is characterised by a classification of linguistic forms as an end in itself, and by concern with precise definition, in an appropriate metalanguage, which draws on a presupposed knowledge of particular rule- governed grammatical features. The second paper is more directly concerned with language *in use*, seeking by a process of comparison to bring out distinctive features of language functions and is, above all, alert to the ways in which language patterns and so mediates ideologies. The point of the exercise is not simply a classification of linguistic forms, though this has to be done in a detailed and accurate way using an appropriate metalanguage, but also a critical reading of the ways in which such forms are deployed at the interface of language and social realities.

Other questions in the same paper involve students in describing different styles, in analysing the functions of different social and geographical dialects, in re-writing a piece of seventeenth century prose into modern English, in analysing the vocabulary patterns in a poem, and in pointing out the different social and political values which attach to written and spoken discourse. Parallel papers from the JMB board involve students in a systematic exploration of the language of popular fiction, in creative writing exercises, and in the collection of naturally-occurring language data for writing up as language projects. There are also overt attempts in the syllabus of both boards to integrate rather than divorce language and literary studies. Schools following such syllabuses report what they describe as 'wash-back' effects in other areas of the English curriculum in the development of language awareness programmes for junior forms, for example. What might be some of the lessons to be drawn from these activities?

One of the possible reasons for the interest of English teachers in language studies is that such syllabuses start from where English teachers currently are. Such language study:

(i) is non-prescriptive

(ii) is concerned with language variation and language change

(iii) is not neglectful of literary text and the development of sensitivity to literary language

(iv) is designed to foster critical insight into language *use* and help students unmask ideologies

(v) encourages student-centred, project-based investigations

(vi) adopts a functionalist, rather than formalist, perspective on language.

As with the Australian work for and with teachers on the description and teaching of written curricular genres, we may have a basis here for a model of language which accords with particular aspects of Romantic ideology. In particular, it seems designed to foster skills of critical interpretation and close reading of all texts; at the same time, it attends to the systematic patterning of language and expects students to be able to analyse such patterns without adopting the decontextualised, prescriptive, formal rule-spotting exercises characteristic of the grammar lessons feared by the English teaching profession.

Above all there is a balance established between reactionary and romantic poles, between language as patterned regularities and language as a creative resource.

Conclusion

The title of this paper *Some Pawns for Kingman* reflects the necessary limitation on a paper given in a context such as this. But pawns are useful pieces in both openings and end games, and it is hoped that some of the ideas and examples produced here may be of some ultimate use in an overall strategy, especially one of mounting strong arguments for a higher profile language study and skills in English teaching. I hope I have suggested that there are some grounds for optimism that this may happen.

I shall conclude by trying to outline briefly the other issues that I have not dealt with at all in this paper. At the least I have not discussed the following vital issues: language in relation to multicultural education; the relationship between first and second language development; the insidious dangers of 'permeation' models for 'language' and 'multicultural education' in teacher training courses; the importance of oracy and of assessment of performance through talk. I also wanted to draw attention to the fact that much argumentation in this whole domain, including many of my examples, is often necessary anecdotal. I hope to have suggested some powerful arguments for a more language-based English curriculum, but we cannot ignore the prevalence of numerous arguments chasing little evidence.

This leads to the need for substantial funded research in the area of language in education. I would like to see major projects into:

(i) the relationship between 'knowing that' and 'knowing how', particularly in relation to writing development;
(ii) grammar teaching, text formation and writing development;
(iii) further descriptions of *genres* of written and spoken English.

Of the above observations I would like to see development and encouragement by the Kingman committee of appropriate materials for classroom language work, and for teacher training courses. Not since the *Language in Use* materials developed in the early seventies, has there been any consistent and principled development of language materials for the lower secondary school, although books by Newby, Forsyth and Wood, and Wiley and Dunk are isolated exceptions. Similarly, with the exception of Open University courses such as PE232 *(Language Development)*, there is nothing in Britain which even remotely approaches the Deakin University distance-teaching modules in linguistics and language learning (developed in the State of Victoria, Australia) for their sophistication and systematic principled approach, and for their rich methodological suggestions. Teachers often only start thinking and re-thinking their subject by exploring course books and experimenting with approaches developed on in-service programmes. Our B.Ed. and P.G.C.E. courses rarely move beyond the kind of course books and theories of English teaching which embrace literature-centred romantic ideologies. It is all too easy to rebuke; and yet the range, diversity and coherence of linguistics applied to teacher training courses for English as a second language, and to teaching materials for English as a second language, provides a nonetheless embarrassing situation for applied linguists committed to mother-tongue language education. Appropriate models for adaptation are often under our noses.

I will conclude by detecting notes of optimism and pessimism in the current debate. Judging from the reception of previous government committee reports, the signs for Kingman may not be particularly auspicious. The lobby from English teachers, especially those most committed to a romantic vision, is very powerful indeed, and cannot be underestimated, let alone discounted.

If language education in English teaching is to move forward, it must be by a thorough understanding of the position of the majority of English teachers, and by the mounting of powerful arguments which exploit the weaknesses and build on the strengths of what I have designated romantic and reactionary tendencies. If such a synthesis can be constructed in a principled manner with concrete examples in support, then those applied linguists interested in English studies may begin to occupy a radical curricular space with exciting possibilities, not least, for the development of English language programmes, but also for the development of a broader education through 'English'.

Notes

1. See in particular the reception given in the national press to the publication of Peter Trudgill's *Accent, Dialect and the School* (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), reported and catalogued in Milroy, J and L. (1985) *Authority in Language* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).
2. Raymond Williams, (1976) *Keywords*, (London: Fontana).
3. Michael Stubbs, 'What is English?' in R A Carter (ed.) (1982) *Linguistics and the Teacher* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).
4. For example, Newby, M (1982) *Making Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Forsyth, I J and Wood, K (1980) *Language and Communication* (London: Longman); Wiley, G and Dunk, M (1985) *Integrated English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
5. *Language and Education* Course materials, Frances Christie (ed.) (Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press).

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE BILINGUAL MEDICAL CONSULTATION

Brian Harrison
University of Leicester School of Education
Arvind Bhatt
Moat Community College, Leicester
James Carey and Philip Ebden
Glenfield Hospital, Leicester

Introduction

Training in doctor-patient communication skills is now reasonably commonplace in medical training, with standard works written on the subject (Byrne and Long 1976), but it perhaps needs to be said that the term *communication skills* as understood by doctors does not necessarily imply linguistic analysis. The focus is on affect and on handling patients sensitively rather than on language form and function. We would assert therefore that applied linguists working in this area need to have a concern for the assimilability of the training models they propose. In addition, most work on communication skills in medicine deals only with monolingual settings, but in many urban areas in particular, the situation where doctor and patient do not share a common language is commonplace. Within the Asian population of Leicester, where the present writers work, 11,200 people speak little or no English as assessed by themselves. Of this number 6,500 are over 45, and it is this older segment of the population which makes the greatest demands on hospital services.

The medical interview is the basis of the diagnostic process, and requires both the doctor and the patient to understand each other fully in order that the maximum amount of information might be obtained by both parties. Obtaining a good case history from patients with a poor command of English involves using an interpreter who is assumed by the doctor to have a good command of both English and the patients mother tongue. We decided to look at the dynamics of the bilingual interview to assess how information was handled and to what extent information was misinterpreted.

Method

We observed four patients, who were all Gujarati speakers, aged between 42 and 70 and who had previously attended an outpatients' department. They had agreed to have an interview with a doctor video recorded and they attended with an interpreter of their choice. The interview was conducted as if this was their first visit to an outpatients' department at the hospital, and lasted for about thirty minutes. Each patient spoke in Gujarati and the interpreter was in each case a family member - husband, son, daughter or grandson. The Gujarati sections of the videotapes were subsequently translated into English and analysed.

Results

The basic discourse structure of the consultation, repeated many times across the four interviews, was that a question from the doctor to elicit information was translated, or mistranslated, into Gujarati, sometimes with editing. The patient responded and the interpreter translated into English, or mistranslated or edited. The doctor then either followed up with a related question, or started a new line of enquiry. A typical example of this pattern is:

Doctor: Is it fair to say she usually produced phlegm with the cold?
Interpreter. (in Gujarati) Do you produce phlegm when you cough?
Patient: (in Gujarati) When I have a bad cold, then there is more phlegm
Interpreter: Whenever she has a cold, there's phlegm
Doctor: All right. Has she ever coughed up blood?

The interpreter has in this instance paraphrased the doctor's question, but an appropriate response has been obtained.

A model for the analysis of medical discourse of this kind was suggested in the Lancaster University D.O.P.A.C.S. papers (Candlin, Bruton and Leather 1974). We have chosen, at least for the moment, not to use such models for the reason suggested in our first paragraph. We believe that doctors would find such an account forbidding. This is not of course to say that functions other than the ones listed above do not appear in our transcripts (doctor greets, doctor reassures, doctor summarises etc) but they were marginal to the dominant pattern. More significantly, perhaps, we recorded no instances of patients asking the doctor questions.

It may be noted that in the speech sample above, nor elsewhere in the transcriptions, is there any evidence of 'foreigner talk' as defined by Ferguson (1975), presumably precisely because the doctor felt that his remarks were being translated accurately.

In the analysis of the transcripts we focussed on three areas: firstly, on the types of question which the doctor asked; secondly on the translation of terminology and thirdly on those aspects of the culture and sociology of the Gujarati family which, on the evidence, apparently impeded communication.

The Doctor's Questions

It seemed to us that in a bilingual interview a lot might depend on the grammatical form as well as on the content of questions. In our analysis we classified questions into three types:-

1. Simple - one clause questions
   e.g. "How long has she had the cough for?"
2. Complex - where one clause is embedded inside another

e.g. "Does she know what the diagnosis is?"

3. Serial - where the patient is asked alternative questions, or questions in series, or given a choice.

   e.g. "Right now, this pain, would she be able to describe it as sharp, or dull, or mmm a burning pain?
   Can she describe it at all?"

We hypothesised that the second type of question might place strains on the interpreter's cognitive processing of language, and the third on his or her memory. A study by Shuy (1974) in the United States in a monolingual setting showed that in question type 3 the patient tended to concentrate on the last item in the series, and neglect the rest. Our results seem clearly to bear out our hypotheses. The table below shows the proportion, expressed as a percentage, of the questions of each type which were mistranslated or not translated:-

Table 1

Consultation	Q Simple %	Q Complex %	Q Serial %	TOTAL
1	19	50	39	23
2	16	25	39	24
3	39	80	67	52
4	29	82	63	44

These results are consistent. In each case, simple questions caused least difficulty, 39% at worst. In three cases out of four, serial questions were next most difficult, 67% at worst. Even our two best interpreters mistranslated or did not translate almost a quarter of all questions. The message then would seem to be clear: doctors in bilingual interviews should keep their questions simple, as defined above. For the record, the response given to out type 3 question above was:

> "She says, you know, when you're going to take a breath and you can't take a breath, it's that kind of pain, sort of".

Terminology

Mistranslation can of course derive from lexis as well as from the processing of structures. There were more than eighty examples of terms mistranslated or not understood by at least one interpreter. Examples are given below, with equivalents of Gujarati translations, where given, in the right hand column.

Table 2

(i) Anatomical

Term	Translated as
abdomen	stomach
ankle	leg
calf	leg
chest	heart, soul
jaw	back teeth
ribs	chest
tonsil	neck

(ii) Symptoms and Conditions

Term	Translated as
asthma	breathlessness
breathlessness	no breath, waking up suddenly
bringing up phlegm	to spit out
diarrhoea	laxative, indigestion
epileptic fit	being mad
faeces	-
gynaecological	-
gallstones	-
indigestion	any stomach pain
passing motions	-
passing water	watery faeces
tightness of chest	pain in chest
tuberculosis	(T.B. was understood)

(iii) Other

Term	Translated as
appetite	frequency of eating
diagnosis	-
evening	late afternoon, night
family	(assumed to be on the male side)
lethargic	lazy, idle
medication	tablets
nationality	where born
night	dinner time, sleep time
swelling	getting fat
treatment	medicine, X ray
washed out	lazy

(iv) Euphemisms

Term	Translated as
back passage	back
water works	-

(v) Loan Words

Term	Translated as
trouble	pain (trouble can mean pain in Indian English)
cough	('kuf' means phlegm in Gujarati)

A similar but much briefer list appears in Medway (1985)

The anatomical mistranslations are easily explained. Gujarati does not 'cut up' the human body in exactly the same way as English, and there is particular confusion between parts of the body which are close to each other. On euphemisms, the doctor should avoid questions of the 'How are the waterworks?' type since our interpreters, at least, seemed to lack this kind of informal register. The list of 'other' terms above hints at different cultural perceptions e.g. in how the word 'family' can be perceived, which we will now discuss.

It can be pointed out at this stage that two of our four interpreters, at least in this context, seemed semi-lingual, adequate in neither English nor Gujarati.

Social and Cultural Factors

Consider the follwing exchanges:-

Doctor: Do you know if Mrs C has even been told that she has tuberculosis? Could you ask her for me?

Patient: *(in Gujarati)* What's he asking?

Interpreter: *(in Gujarati)* He's asking if the doctor told you what I suspect, did he?

Patient: *(in Gujarati)* No

Doctor: All right, all right. But we know she has problems with her health.

Asian patients in general seem loth to admit to a history of tuberculosis in the family. The reason would seem to be that if such knowledge is disseminated in the community then the marriage chances of the family's sons and daughters can be affected, and a degree of social ostracism occur. We have then different perceptions about information which it is fitting to pass outside the family, even to a doctor. It is not unlikely that there are other similar taboo topics.

There seem also to be different perceptions about topics which can be discussed inside the family, and about who can discuss them. These relate in part to the positional and patriarchal nature of many Asian families, where the father in particular is the arbiter in such matters. We had one instance where when a wife was asked questions about serious illness in her family, the interpreter, her husband, responded to the doctor, with information about *his* family. The connotation of the term *family* was the male blood line.

Sons and daughters found it embarrassing to ask their mothers questions about menstruation and bowel movements and indeed there was a tendency for questions about bodily functions in general to be glossed over.

Finally, one of the most difficult problems in arriving at a case history was establishing a precise time scale. Time seemed not to be seen in a linear fashion, but rather as clustering round events in past lives. These events were in turn not sequenced, but seemed to flow into each other. Both the Hindu and Muslim calendars are of course lunar, with an imprecise relationship with Western years.

To sum up: we have here interviews which seemed on the surface, at least to the doctor, to be reasonably normal, but which were in fact for the linguistic and cultural reasons given severely dysfunctional. The quality of information given was such that a correct initial diagnosis was likely to be difficult. These conclusions must be tentative, since they are based on interviews with only four patients by one doctor, but we feel that they are sufficiently striking for a more exhaustive study to be desirable.

Note

In the discussion which followed the paper, the question of interpreters in the National Health Service was discussed. Assuming the finance was forthcoming this would obviously be in most ways desirable. It could be questioned, however, whether an interpreter, if seen as from the community and having access to it, would be successful in eliciting information which the family regarded as sensitive.

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LEARNER DIARIES : POSSIBILITIES AND PITFALLS

Christina Howell-Richardson and Brian Parkinson
Institute for Applied Language Studies
University of Edinburgh

Introduction

The value of learner diaries has been drawn to the attention of the language teaching community by publications such as Bailey 1983 (and the earlier works mentioned in that article), and their use is now quite widespread, especially amongst those interested in learner autonomy. The available literature on this subject tends to adopt a very positive tone, but this may be a distortion due to the well-known fact that only 'successful experiments' tend to reach publication, and that their 'successful' aspects tend to be emphasised. Our personal contacts suggest that many diary projects are aborted or found to be unsatisfactory in various ways, and our own work has revealed many pitfalls. This paper attempts to help researchers and teachers to clarify their thinking about diaries by listing the purposes for which they may be used, showing some practical consequences of conflicts between these purposes, and offering a checklist of issues on which decisions have to be made.

In keeping with this generalising orientation, we devote only this one paragraph to a description of our own diary work in 1986-7. We worked with three groups of learners (N=74), all on a full-time General English course, studying for periods of between three weeks and two years. They were asked to complete two A4 pages daily for seven to ten days, and were given prompts for topics such as 'in-class activities', 'out-of-class activities', 'my problems' and 'what I have learnt'. Our aim was to provide factual input for two purposes: for counselling the learners on their study and language use habits, and for research purposes. In the latter instance we were looking for variables which would explain differences in rates of language improvement. We found three main candidate variables: *informativity*, the amount of concrete information included in the diaries; *anxiety*, including all indications of stress, worry, confusion, depression, self-denigration etc.; and *leisure FL use*, the amount of time spent in social interaction with native speakers outside class. In fact only the last of these significantly correlated (+0.33, sig. 0.02), with overall language improvement. Informativity correlated with scores on end-of-unit 'achievement' tests of specific material taught, but not with 'proficiency' tests measuring general language performance. Anxiety did not correlate at all, perhaps because we had failed to distinguish its 'facilitating' and 'debilitating' varieties (Alpert and Haber 1960).

We now turn from our own project to general discussion.

Uses

The largest group of possible diary uses appear to be the pedagogical ones, most of which involve establishing effective channels of communication between teacher and learner as an input to later face-to-face interaction with some kind of 'counselling' orientation. We can subdivide these uses as follows:

(a) to identify and attempt to allay debilitating anxiety;
(b) to offer advice on specific learning difficulties;
(c) to provide a basis for counselling in individualised study techniques;
(d) to provide a basis for formative feedback on independent project work;
(e) to encourage learners to assess their own performance in specific linguistic areas and self-prescribe remedial action;
(f) to encourage similar self-analysis and action in relation to target language behaviour, especially in out-of-class activities (e.g. maximising native-speaker contact).

Next we mention two uses or purposes which one might consider 'ends in themselves' (e.g. if FLT is thought to have general educational objectives), but which might also be indirectly conducive to active learning behaviour and thereby to acquisition. Both of these purposes are in principle independent of the diary actually being read by the teacher, though in practice reading and counselling are likely to be helpful or even essential:

(g) to encourage curiosity about the target culture;
(h) to encourage students to keep a personal record of their stay in a foreign country.

In a category of its own - and we wonder should it come here, or first, or last in the list? - we put:

(i) authentic (?) language practice.

Next we consider the use of diaries for evaluation purposes. This could obviously include tens of sub-categories, but we mention only:

(j) short-term (corrective) adjustments to material and/or methods;
(k) attempting to re-balance group dynamics by moving students (between or within classes), making different arrangements for non-whole-class work, speaking to other students about interaction problems etc;
(l) evaluation decisions taken at course-director level, including change of teacher.

And finally an even more open-minded list of 'research' uses, of which we list four touched upon on our own project:

(m) to discover what language learners do, especially outside class;
(n) to find out about their feelings, especially learning-related anxiety;
(o) to find out what they remember of their class, and how they conceptualise and categorise teaching/learning events and topics;
(p) to explore how (m), (n) and (o) relate to success in learning.

Dimensions

The range of possible diary uses, then, is extensive, but it is in this very extensiveness that the main problem lies. One is constantly tempted to try to make diaries 'do everything', and whilst they can probably do more than one thing at a time, they certainly cannot do all sixteen listed above, or anything like it. One must therefore make principled decisions about what use or uses are intended, and negotiate these with the students, colleagues and everyone involved. Decisions about use have consequences for at least four vital 'dimensions' of diary projects, and confusion about use causes tension on one or more of these dimensions. The dimensions are:

(i) *Layout:* Includes physical form of diaries - booklet, loose sheets etc. - what headings, grids, instructions etc. are provided, how much space for student writing and how this is sub-divided. Also language used - L1 or TL.

(ii) *Access:* Can completed diaries by seen by e.g.:
  - all teachers and fellow students?
  - only one or two researchers?
  - only the diarist him/herself, who may 'edit' them for use in oral interaction with researcher?

(iii) *Administration:* Includes such matters as when diary sheets are given out and collected, what oral orientation is given, and whether students are expected to complete a sheet every day, or only when they have something particular to say.

(iv) *Feedback:* Is this given on the content, or on the linguistic correctness, or both, or neither? By the class teacher, the researcher, the course director....? In all cases, when the student asks for it, when criticisms are made, when 'anxiety' is expressed or implied....?

Tensions

We now give examples of practical difficulties/tensions, from our own project, which reflect competing purposes:

(i) *Language practice 'versus' counselling feedback*

A normal first reaction on this issue is to say that diary entries should not be marked for linguistic correctness, or that only incidental comments should be made, as otherwise learners may not express their true feelings. But some of our learners felt that the diaries were a waste of time if *not* corrected......

(ii) *Course evaluation 'versus' language practice access*

Diaries were open to class teacher inspection with the first group in our study (cohort 1), but not with cohort 2. Some cohort 1 students had 'dried up' after a few days when they realised that their teacher was reading their (sometimes critical) remarks. But in cohort 2 some students seemed unhappy because the teacher was not doing anything about their criticisms....

(iii) *Language practice 'versus' research format*

An advanced Swedish student made the following comment: "I write things in the language in which I think of them. If I hear something in English I write it in English .... What I feel I write in Swedish".

This and similar comments led us to wonder whether there would be a case for asking the students to write their diaries in their LI. Our working notes suggest: "... that writing in the L1 would reduce the filter effect of the L2. L1 diaries could be administered for research by submission of an L2 review of the diary in prose form or on audio-cassette". We have not yet tried this with our EFL students (something similar was attempted on our MSc course); one problem may be that, when the language-practice 'excuse' for diaries is removed, students may either be unmotivated to write or may conceal more as a defence against a more overtly 'psychological' investigation.

(iv) *Research 'versus' counselling/feedback*

We claim an 'action research' perspective, and indeed did take action when specific and soluble individual problems were thrown up during the study, but wonder if we should have done more. For example, we have lots of material on 'the good language learner', including advice on out-of-class behaviour etc. Should we give this out to all students at the start of their course with us, at the risk of 'contaminating' any research data about actual out-of-class behaviour? In principle, the problem is similar to that of the doctor field-testing new drugs - if s/he strongly suspects that drug A saves more lives, can s/he continue to give a control group drug B until the end of the experiment?

In practice, it seems that this is one of our lesser problems. At least with long-stay students, it seems best to find out about their 'unguided' style of learning and socialising before attempting to advise them; massive doses of 'how to learn' advice would probably be ineffective at the start of a course anyway.

(v) *Research 'versus' course evaluation/format and administration*

It may (as suggested by Parkinson et al 1982 and elsewhere) be unrealistic to expect the same research instrument to capture detailed, 'low-level' information for immediate use in formative evaluation and 'high-level' information for fundamental research.

In fact, our diaries did give us both 'evaluation' information and some kinds of 'research' information, notably on out-of-class behaviour, but we do not feel that they collected adequate and fully interpretable data on, for example, anxiety. For this, a different format/administration, e.g. "Write when you like, on blank paper", or even the use of interviews instead of

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diaries, might have been better.

Checklist for diary design/use

Any team of teachers/researchers planning a diary study should agree on their answers to basic questions about approach and objectives before undertaking this work. Use of a checklist is recommended for this purpose. One such checklist, attempting a distillation of points made in the previous section is given below - improvements, either general or for specific context of use, will no doubt be easily found.

(i) *Instructions*
    What information does the teacher wish to elicit?
(ii) *Confidentiality*
    To whom will this information be subsequently available?
(iii) *Subsequent guidance*
    (a) Should the students "prepare" their diary entries in any way?
    (b) How much "feedback" is to be given? What form will this feedback take?
    (c) To what extent does the teacher/researcher wish to influence the students approach to the diaries?
    (d) Will the students lose interest if no guidance is available?
(iv) *A compulsory or optional activity?*
    To what extent are the learner-diaries an *integral* part of coursework?
(v) *Uses/exploitation of diary*
    (a) Are the diaries to be used for unguided writing-practice, leading to formal, linguistic correction and identification of individual students' linguistic difficulties?
    (b) How useful are learner-diaries in course and lesson evaluation? How quickly could alterations in syllabus or class activities take effect?
    (c) If one gains insight into an individual's approach and reactions to the learning situation, which uses of this information would be ethical and effective?
    (d) Would the diary-entries or parts thereof be useful for classroom trouble-shooter sessions?
    (e) What are the expectations of the students?
    (f) Is it reasonable or ethical to use learner-diaries for teacher or student-evaluation?
    (g) To whom should the diaries be made available and what possible uses or misuses may arise therefrom?
    (h) If the teacher reads the diary only on the request of the diarist, how can diary-keeping be justified as a useful language-learning exercise and how may the exercise be subsequently exploited if at all?

Conclusion

Diary studies can be immensely useful for pedagogical purposes, for course evaluation and for basic research. Even our own study, which was in many ways badly thought out and executed, yielded clear benefits in all three areas, and, most important, was considered worthwhile and even enjoyable to varying extents by most of those who participated. Nonetheless, we are far more cautious about diaries now than when we started the project. We feel that the recent enthusiasm for diaries within the profession, sparked off it seems mainly by works such as Bailey 1983 in which professional language teachers reflect on their own anxieties in going back to the classroom, has been rather excessive. 'Ordinary' FL students cannot be expected to show the same enthusiasm for diaries unless there is 'something in it for them'. This means careful planning, for without such planning the result will be, from the research/evaluation perspective, no usable data, and, from the pedagogic perspective, disruption and disappointment.

In particular, the attraction of anxiety-based explanations for student problems can lead to simplistic analysis, and to teachers/researchers 'playing at psychology' in a way which may be positively harmful.

Anxiety does not feature on our list of predictor variables, which does not mean that it should be ignored - we have probably simply failed to identify and sub-categorise it well enough - but rather that it interacts with a range of more mundane factors which we may be professionally better equipped to do something about.

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VOCABULARY SIZE AS A PLACEMENT INDICATOR

Paul Meara
Birkbeck College, London University
and
Glyn Jones
Eurocentres

Background

This paper describes a placement test which was developed for the Eurocentres Group during 1986-87. The Eurocentres schools, like many other private sector language schools in the UK work on a cycle of short courses each lasting for four weeks. This means that every four weeks there is a huge turn-over of students, and a large number of new students have to be assessed and assigned to classes of an appropriate level. In most schools, this assessment is done by means of a complex battery of tests specially designed for this purpose, and generally referred to as placement tests. The tests currently used by Eurocentres, the *Joint Entrance Test* (JET), are fairly typical of this sort of test; they comprise a listening comprehension test, a grammar test and a reading test, supplemented by an oral interview.

The main problem with tests of this sort is that they take a long time to administer and mark. In a situation where time is at a premium because classes cannot be started until the placement procedure is completed this is obviously a serious shortcoming.

The tests that we have devised differ radically from traditional placement tests. They are very quick to administer (typically they need only 10-15 minutes to complete) and because the whole test is run by a small micro-computer the test is self-scoring and does not need to be checked by a teacher. This represents a large saving in teacher-hours, and greatly simplifies the placement procedure.

The Test

The test we devised for Eurocentres is very different from a traditional placement test, in that it is basically a vocabulary test, and does not attempt to measure other aspects of the learner's knowledge of English. The justification for this approach is that there is a large body of evidence (for English as an L1) that vocabulary knowledge is heavily implicated in all practical language skills, and that in general, speakers with a large vocabulary perform better on a wide range of linguistic indicators than speakers with a more limited vocabulary (Anderson and Freebody 1981).

However, our test is not just a traditional vocabulary test of the type familiar from Cambridge Proficiency examinations. Instead of testing a small number of vocabulary items with complicated multiple-choice type tests, our test is an attempt to measure the absolute size of a learner's vocabulary in English. We do this by simply displaying a large number of English words on the computer screen and asking the testee to decide whether he knows each of the words displayed or not. The computer program then uses some sophisticated mathematical techniques to estimate the testee's actual vocabulary size. The principal advantage of this methodology is that the test is totally automated. It takes less than 10 minutes to run, and scores itself without any manual intervention.

It is obviously not possible to demonstrate this technique in printed format, but you will get a rough idea of how the test works if you try the test in Table 1 before you go any further.

Table 1

Look through the French words listed below. Cross out words that you do not know well enough to say what they mean. Keep a record of how long it takes you to do the test.

VIVANT
MELANGE
MOUP
SOUTENIR
REPOS
GOUTER
ETOULAGE
DEMENAGER
AJURER
LEUSSE
LAVIRE
ORNIR
GOTER
TROUVER
LIVRER
VION
SIECLE
GANAL
FOULARD
ECARTER
POIGNEE
BARRON
CRUYER
SID
CERISE
PONTE
MAGIR
IVRE
LAGUE
TORVEAU
HARTON
EXIGER
MIGNETTE
EQUIPE
CLAGE
HESITER
ROMAN
PAPIMENT
ROMPANT
FOMBE
INONDATION
PRETRE
TOULE
AVARE
JAMBONNANT
MISSONNEUR
TOUTEFOIS
SURPRENDRE
CHIC
CONFITURE

The test in Table 1 presents you with a list of French words and asks you to say which of these words you know. The words are actually a sample of words from the *deuxieme degré* of *Francais Fondamental*, which comprises a total of approximately 2000 high frequency French words, and if you have studied school French even to an elementary level, you should have been able to recognise at least some of these words. The test in Table 1 actually contains two types of item: real words (which you might have recognised) and imaginary, non-existent words (which you cannot possibly have recognised). This combination of real and imaginary words gives us four combinations of items and answers:

type of item	real	imaginary
response YES	RY	IY
response NO	RN	IN

Now suppose that you identified all the real words, and rejected all the imaginary words in the test. In this case we would want to say that you reliably recognised the real words, and, because these words are a sample from a set of 2000 words, we would probably want to say that you would be able to recognise reliably all 2000 words in the set.

Suppose, on the other hand, that you identified half the real words and rejected all the imaginary ones. In this case, we would want to say that you could probably recognise 50% of the 2000 word set, i.e. about 1000 words.

More interesting cases arise where people produce YES responses to imaginary words. Suppose, for example, you recognised all the real words, but also claimed to recognise half the imaginary words. In this case, we would want to argue that your score of 100% on the real words is too high; it needs to be reduced because your threshold for saying that you recognise a word is too low. The size of the adjustment depends on the number of IY responses you make - obviously, if you make lots of IYs, then your acceptance threshold is very low and you are likely to produce RY responses by chance.

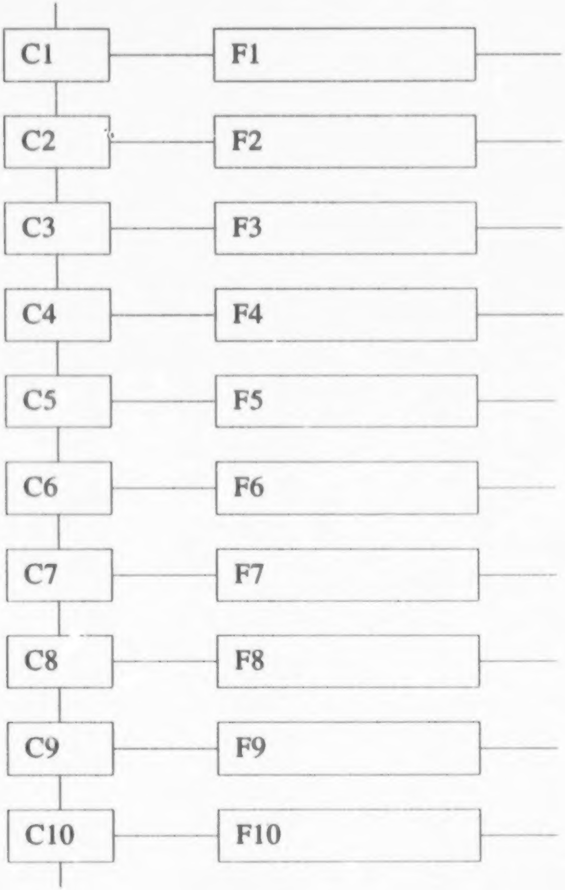
The mathematics of all this is not too difficult. In the 1950s, the Navy carried out a great deal of research on how well ASDIC operators could identify enemy submarines. They were interested in three types of behaviour: times when an operator correctly identified a submarine that was actually there; times when an operator failed to identify a submarine that was actually there; and times when an operator identified a submarine that didn't actually exist. You will see that there is an obvious parallel between these three situations and the RY IY and RN responses described above; all that is necessary is to replace "submarines" by "French words". The mathematical model devised to handle the submarine situation (signal detection theory) should also apply to our vocabulary recognition task.

The test which we devised for Eurocentres uses this basic principle, but is rather more complicated than the test outlined above. A schematic version of our test is shown in Figure 1. Basically, our test is divided up into a number of levels, each corresponding to a frequency band of 1000 words. The first part of the test starts off at the highest frequency band, and assesses how many of these words a testee can be deemed to know by sampling 10 real words and 10 imaginary words. If the testee scores highly on this band, s/he is tested on the next

Figure 1 The structure of the test files

Coarse files (C1-C10) contain 10 items from the bottom end of a specified frequency band. The testee moves through the coarse files in turn, until her performance is too poor to allow her to continue, or until she successfully completes the final file C10.

Fine files (F1-F10) contain 50 items from the specified frequency range, and thus allow us to test explicitly one word in twenty. Once the testee finishes a fine file, her total vocabulary score is calculated.



band, and this process continues until performance drops below a preset threshold. At this point, the test works out a rough estimate of how many words we think the testee knows, and tests a further fifty words from the appropriate frequency band. So, suppose our testee scores 100% on bands 1-4, but only 20% on band 5, the program reckons that the testee knows somewhere betwee 4 and 5 thousand words, and does its detailed testing on band 5. The detailed testing phase actually tests one word in twenty at the appropriate level.

Assessment

So far we have run three versions of this test with about 250 students from a wide range of language backgrounds, 109 at the Cambridge Eurocentre School, and two groups totalling 158 in London. For practical reasons, we have mainly been interested in correlating the results of our test with the results of the Eurocentres JET test - i.e. we are interested in establishing how far our Vocabulary test can be used as an alternative to JET. The results of this work are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2
Correlations between the Vocabulary Test and JET

1: CAMBRIDGE	109 testees	overall correlation		.664
		subgroups:	French	.549
			German	.807
	adjustments:	4 out of 5		
1: LONDON	159 testees	overall correlation		.717
		subgroups:	French	.556
			Italian	.792
			Spanish	.723
			Portuguese	.756
			German	.790
			Non-IE	.735
	adjustments:	9 out of 14		

There are a number of interesting points to note here. Firstly, the correlations between JET and VOC (the vocabulary test) are generally high: in fact, given the diverse nature of the tests, the results are surprisingly high. Obviously, the correlations are not perfect, but given that JET is itself unsatisfactory in some ways, this is only to be expected. More interesting is the fact that the correlations vary slightly for different language groups. In general, correlations for homogeneous language groups are better than correlations for mixed groups, and some linguistic groups produce very high levels of correlation indeed. This is not always the case, however. With the French speakers studied here, the correlations between VOC and JET are consistently low. At the moment, we don't really know how to interpret these differences. One possible explanation is that the VOC test in its present format is systematically biassed against speakers of particular languages, but it is equally possible that the VOC test is accurate, and that the JET test is biassed in the same way. Some evidence for this latter view comes from another study (Meara and Buxton 1988) in which very high levels of correlation between a VOC test and a more traditional M/C test were found with French speakers.

A further check on the effectiveness of the VOC test as a placement indicator comes from adjustments made to class registers one week after the original placement by JET. In the Cambridge study (109 Ss) five students were reallocated to a different group on the basis of their actual performance in class. Four of these cases were moved up to a higher level than their original placement, and in every case this move was in line with the placements produced by VOC. In the London trials (159 Ss), a questionaire was used to assess major discrepancies in the placements produced by JET. This trawl produced 14 cases; in nine of these cases, teachers' assessments agreed with the VOC score rather than with the JET score. Not surprisingly, if these cases are excluded from the data, the overall correlation between JET and VOC increases.

Conclusion

This paper has described a relatively small-scale study which uses a measure of vocabulary size as a way of placing students at the start of their course. The data that we have presented suggests that the test works well, though obviously a great deal more work will be needed before we can claim it is thoroughly reliable. The test in its present format, for example, is basically a test of visual familiarity, and it assumes that recognition of a word form is an adequate test of word knowledge. This assumption is clearly one that needs to be probed carefully. Obviously, formal recognition is necessary but not sufficient for word knowledge, but by relying on recognition, the test probably over-estimates true vocabulary knowledge. Whether this really matters or not is anybody's guess: it could be, for example, that passive recognition vocabulary is generally closely related to the size of a learner's active vocabulary, and that a more accurate estimate of vocabulary size could be obtained by suitably adjusting the raw scores found on the VOC test. Another problem arises from the use of imaginary words. The current version of the test uses imaginary words which are very carefully constructed so that they share the physical characteristics of the real words in the same set. However, it is clear to us that some of the imaginary words are easier to handle than others: some can be rejected instantaneously, while others cause even native speakers of English to puzzle for a long time. We also think that some imaginary words cause difficulty to speakers from particular language backgrounds. Again, we don't know why this should be, but the problem is one that can easily be solved by further work.

At the moment, then, the best we can say is that the work we have done looks very promising, and if further developments live up to these promises, then it looks as though the tedious and time-consuming task of placing students at the start of a course could be greatly simplified and stream-lined. A small contribution to "applied linguistics in society" perhaps, but one that will be welcomed by many teachers.

However, the VOC test has other advantages, besides these practical ones. One major advantage from the research point of view is the speed with which the VOC test can be administered. Since it only takes ten minutes, there is no reason why it should not become a standard tool for assessing subjects in empirical research. At the moment, the research literature uses only vague labels for describing people who take part in research: "50 first certificate students", "25 students following a pre- university course at Stanford", or "150 air-force pilots" are typical examples of this sort of labelling. Clearly they are not very informative; it would be much more helpful to be told that we were dealing with, say 150 air-force pilots who scored a mean of 4500 on the VOC test with a standard deviation of 50 words. The fact that the VOC test is so quick to administer makes this kind of standardisation a real possibility.

The VOC test is also interesting because it opens up areas of research which have not been accessible before. If the VOC test really does measure vocabulary size, then we can begin to ask questions like these:

how fast do people learn new words?
how much individual variation is there in this skill?
is it affected by other variables, such as L1, or L1 vocabulary size?
how effective are different types of teaching program? e.g. do intensive courses produce more vocabulary learning than less intensive eight-week ones?
how quickly do learners who don't practice lose their vocabulary?
is the fall-out rate such that it reaches a stable assymptote? i.e.
is there a residue of words that you never really forget, no matter how little you practice?

These are questions, that we hope to address in the near future.

To sum up, then, the VOC started out as a practical research problem aimed at providing a solution to an organisational problem. In R and D circles, it is common to hear people talking about the practical spin-offs from theoretical research: the VOC test seems to be a clear case of theoretical spin-offs from the practical research. Maybe the real future of Applied Linguistics lies down this road?

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ARE YOU DECODING ME? THE ASSESSMENT OF UNDERSTANDING IN ORAL INTERACTION

Jill Schrafnagl and Duncan Cameron
Institute of Linguists

This paper addresses the question of the comprehension of spoken discourse and its role in language proficiency and proficiency assessment. It will draw upon various aspects of our work in this area, including data from our recent pilot testing. Our main contention will be that, although comprehension skills are a *sine qua non* in spoken communication, they cannot be assessed *directly* as many language tests, including the US FSI interview and most FL oral tests used in Britain, claim to do. A central concern in our work on L2 proficiency is whether the significance of what is said or written has been recovered by the hearer of reader, or what significance she has imposed on the discourse. We shall be discussing the problems of assessing proficiency in the decoding of spoken language, looking first at how this is currently approached in second language testing. Subsequently, we have a few comments to make on the subjects of language proficiency itself, on proficiency and performance testing, and on comprehension during oral interaction.

Finally, we shall outline our work on the design and development of tests of second language proficiency and in particular their decoding requirements and look at some of the data from pilot tests involving L2 oral interactive performance.

The aim of the project is to develop examinations of foreign or second language proficiency at levels from beginners up to first degree-equivalence for use in the 1990 and beyond. The syllabus should be applicable to all languages likely to be in demand - currently, the Institute of Linguists runs examinations in some 40 languages at lower levels, dropping to 20 at the highest level.

A syllabus for all-comers examinations which set out to test proficiency in using a foreign or second language for communicative purpose, whether the user's ends are social, professional, or both, must be sensitive to the heterogeneity of language learners and users and the multiplicity of their goals. The types of proficiency tested need to be derived not from L2 classroom language use but from how languages are used naturally, by native speakers and bilinguals at any stage in their learning and in personal or professional domains. (It is not possible in this paper to discuss the practice of applying an ideal native speaker model, a monolingual model generally, to the bilingual. We do have considerable reservations about this, and about the convergence implications it has and we have taken a rather different point of departure in our assessment criteria).

The tests we have designed are task-based. The tasks themselves are based in what people need to be able to do when called on to use a second language in addition to their first, or generally preferred language, in contexts where communication, and not learning, is the primary objective.

The patterns of L2 use which emerge from investigations of so-called real-life language use in context are complex. In performance, a learner's two (or more) languages are integrated in a variety of ways. The second language user also typically lives out his/her role as a bilingual, mediating between cultures and the members of different speech communities. This role as mediator and facilitator of cross-cultural, cross-lingual communication is particularly important at higher levels of proficiency, where learners are increasingly able to, and motivated to, apply their L2 competence not only in personal but also in professional contexts. These features of second language use have hitherto largely been ignored in testing, even in what is declared to be proficiency testing. The conventional approach is to assess L2 proficiency monolingually, the only usual exception being tests of translation or interpreting.

A further tendency is to assess *skills* in isolation, and this too has very little to do with natural language use. The skills and subskills are typically integrated in many different configurations in natural language use, including second language. It only makes sense to de-integrate, or segregate, skills when testing for particular experimental and diagnostic purposes. Where teaching programmes are based on a contrived separation of skills the (achievement) testing that follows will tend to take the same approach; the arguments for this are circular and generally not predicated on any construct of language competence, any theory or descriptive framework for language use or any model of language proficiency.

The terms of our research and development brief require us to design, pilot, modify and retrial proficiency tests and assessment systems in a range of languages and have the new examinations ready to go into production by 1989/90. We have thus had to combine experimental and pilot phases of testing, and are about to enter the third and final phase of piloting. The material we have piloted to date consists of integrated task-based tests involving French, Spanish, Italian and currently Chinese and English. We shall be concentrating in our presentation of data on examples where the oral/aural interactional comprehension skills are an essential component of the language proficiency performance being tested.

First, however, it may be helpful to consider how the comprehension of spoken discourse is currently approached elsewhere in second language testing. It is frequently assumed that the sort of examination task that is conventionally known as "listening comprehension" is a valid indicator of a learner's ability to decode language in its aural form. It is widely recognized, of course, that the assessment of decoding skills is fraught with difficulties; it may still, nevertheless, be worthwhile to look in more detail at some these.

One basic objection is a very familiar one - that the "listening comprehension" exercise has to elicit some sort of observable behaviour in relation to a process which, in natural language use, need not have any visible or observable manifestations. So failure to perform adequately on such tasks may be a result of the nature of the behaviour eliciting task, and not of a deficiency in the aural decoding skill. There are, however, further objections. Aural decoding in a natural context takes place typically within each decoder's mental frameworks; these allow the decoder to predict the drift of a message, to block or ignore irrelevant or uninteresting messages, and select only those bits of message that are relevant for whatever purpose the decoder has at just that moment when he is listening. The skills required by the same decoder when he is participating in a "listening comprehension" exercise without these comfortable props, are rather different; failure to decode a "listening comprehension" exercise cannot, then be taken as evidence of an inability to decode in contexts of natural language use. There is a further serious objection to the interpretation of "listening comprehension" exercises as valid instruments for assessing aural decoding skills. What the classic listening comprehension exercise by its very nature is unable to simulate is that in natural, non-examination, language use, aural messages which are to be decoded are typically negotiable. The listener - or "receiver of the message" - in face-to-face interaction, is able to encourage the supplier of the message to adjust, rephrase or recapitulate the message until he or she is confident of having received and understood just that information that the receiver wants.

(For the purpose of this paper the word *interactive* will be used to describe this sort of listening, realizing that the word has been used in a rather different sense in relation to reading and other listening processes).

The conventional listening comprehension test is a test of non-interactive listening skills. While for many, learners and native speakers alike, an important non-interactive listening scenario is "entertainment" listening - listening to radio, television or plays - non-interactive listening is a more narrowly-based skill in many professional and vocational uses of languages, being restricted to listening to presentations and lectures in a work or learning context. A proficiency examination could not claim that a wide enough range of listening proficiency skills can be assessed solely by means of a non-interactive listening exercise.

It could be claimed that oral examinations are designed to assess interactive listening skills. Unfortunately, many oral examinations are designed typically to elicit a sample of language and then to assess it by means of various fluency/accuracy scales. A different type of oral examination can be devised in which the candidate 'controls' the interaction and negotiates with the interlocutor to elicit a message in a form consonant with his or her ability to decode it.

The relationship between interactants in which one holds information and the other has to apply appropriate interactional strategies to access the information can be simulated in the examination context by tasks in which candidates have to work within an information or opinion collecting context defined by a brief. The conventional interview examination is typically assessed by means of rating scales that concern themselves with such features as quality of language, pronunciation, fluency, and so on - features derived from an analysis of the surface features of language, and not in any way related to the decoding processes that are taking place while the interaction develops.

We need to understand a great deal more than we do know about how people interact to negotiate meaning and the nature of the processing routines involved, about what makes a good interactant and good listener.

In oral L2 testing, such phenomena as pauses, misalignments, signals of comprehension monitoring and confirmation elicitation are too easily dismissed as dysfluencies marking off the L2 speaker's shortfall from the idealized native-speaker behaviour; but they could equally well be efficient and effective interactional strategies employed to get the interlocutor to modify his/her input.

So we need to know more about the way interaction is modified in different situational contexts, particularly, how native speakers and non-native speakers interact. The body of research into interactional competence has focused largely on conversation analysis of L1 speakers, and we should be cautious about generalizing from this to bilingual and L2 contexts.

Comprehension studies also tend to focus on communication breakdown and repair mechanisms. It is not by any means always apparent in oral interactions when or how that breakdown has occurred, particularly not in a test situation.

It must be remembered that we were not concerned with developmental acquisitional issues except very indirectly, in that we are sampling proficiency at different levels. We were seeking to design proficiency tests which would sample performance on tasks simulating major features of those encountered in the use of one's two languages outside the classroom.

The resulting test design at the highest levels, which are very approximately equivalent to A-level and first degree level, is modular. Each module requires testees to perform complex integrated tasks. The modules differ in the area of language use to which L2 proficiency is applied - for example, political and social research, international journalism, media monitoring, negotiation and representation, information services, transactions via the telephone or correspondence. Consequently, the modules differ, too, in the range of texts and tasks which are encountered; they require varying arrays of skills and subskills; and differing roles are assumed by the L2 and L1 in every case. For the examinations themselves, candidates will select from the range of modules those which best reflect their interests, goals and perceived needs and attempt any module whenever they feel ready. Thus, examinations are not only focused on language use, they are also centred on the user.

In sampling performance on realistic occupationally-oriented tasks, these tests are in some ways similar to language performance testing as developed, for instance, by Marjorie Wesche and her colleagues in the Ontario Test of English as a Second Language. There are also major differences; where OTESL uses banding of skills in a number of separate scales, performance in our tests is assessed entirely on task fulfilment criteria (the "driving test" approach).

During the piloting of tests we have not only been assessing overall task fulfilment but have been collecting data on different aspects of the tasks. The data produced on one particular module form the basis of the following discussion. The module is degree-level, and the task is one of researching an issue using a variety of sources and reporting the results.

In the pilot material from which the data are taken, the L1 was English and the L2 was German. The task specification required the testee to research and report on the situation of the migrant worker, or *Gastarbeiter*, in the Federal Republic of Germany, specifically the policies on assimilation, integration, repatriation and recent changes in approaches to the education of the children of migrant workers. The putative end-user of the report is a British MEP who needs to be briefed for his/her work on a minorities committee. The detailed task remit specified the aspects on which information had to be obtained and evaluated. Two types of source were available: a dossier of printed materials including surveys, editorials, excerpts from government reports and statistics, and an interview with a German representative of a nongovernmental minority rights commission. The interviewee would, if asked, be able to update and flesh out the information from the published materials. The interview subtask thus incorporated an information gap situation with pre-allocated roles. The oral input was contextualised by both the task specification and the dossier of materials. The input information is held constant by also giving the interviewee a detailed specification and by training interlocutors, to ensure consistency of response to the testee's questions. the interviewer - the candidate in other words - has an active planning role, has to produce comprehensible output and manage the interaction so that he/she elicits comprehensible input, and has constantly to check his/her intake and update his/her mental representation. At the same time, the interviewer must record the relevant information, using whatever aids and strategies preferred: note-taking in the L2, extempore translation and notes in the L1, ticking against some checklist prepared along with the interview prompt notes, and so on. Strategies are, of course, not prescribed.

The interviewee will not always stick to the point after all it is the interviewer's point, that is, it is the candidate who is pursuing a particular objective.

So the interviewee may - is in fact briefed to - introduce opinion (flagged as such) along with fact. The candidate has to be able to distinguish reported fact from opinion. The results of the research are then written up in a report in the L1. This is a cognitively demanding task, as are all the other modules and tasks at this level. The assessment of task fulfilment looks solely at the evidence in the report. We are concerned with the different factors in task performance only in so far as they contribute to the required outcome. In our pilot tests, however, we are also investigating relationships between performance on subtasks and overall task fulfilment. We are after all, assuming with our test design that success in the outcome is only attainable if the constituent processes are successful. We are also, less explicitly but no less importantly, claiming that conventional approaches to the assessment of L2 proficiency on separate accuracy and fluency scales for the four *macroskills* are adequate to establish the kind of performance proficiency that will get you and keep you a demanding job using languages. Specifically, the structural-lexical-phonological-fluency scales used in so many tests of second language proficiency reflect a totally inadequate model of interactional language competence. While the examination was being administered the native-speaker German interview interlocutor did not assess the candidates' performance in any way, restricting herself to the role of information supplier as detailed in the task brief. Each oral interaction was recorded on tape-recorder.

Following the interview, in which candidates sought to supplement information gleaned from the written dossier, reports were written in English (that is, the learner's L1) according to the task brief, fleshing out information from different sources. It is important to realise that the carrying out of the task brief depended upon this process of synthesis. It was impossible, in other words, in an adequate report to mark the success of the report according to a check-list of essential points whose origin (from either text or interview) could be clearly identified.

The report contained five sections; each section was awarded a maximum of four points. Each omission or misrepresentation of information in any section led to a subtraction of one point, giving a range in each section from zero to four. This measure on a scale of 0 - 20 (Fig.1 column A) indicates the extent to which each candidate was able to identify and put together the information needed to fulfill the task brief.

Scale B in Fig.1 is concerned more directly with the success or failure of the interview - measuring success or failure as the ability of the candidate/interviewer to extract the necessary information from the interviewee/interlocutor - in other words, to fulfill the terms of the task brief as it applied to the interview.

There were seven different topic areas where information from the written sources needed to be complemented by additional or relativizing information which could be obtained only from the interview. Each report was given a 0 - 7 rating depending on whether the interview information in each of these areas had been accurately and fully transmitted.

It was found that there was a very close association between scales A and B. All candidates who gained 7 point maximum on scale B gained a high score on scale A (candidates 2,4,5,9,11,13,19).

Only one high scorer on scale A gained less than 7 on scale B (candidate 15).

It could be argued that the close relationship between success or failure on these two scales was caused by the overlap between them - both are arrived at by means of an analysis of the same product - the candidates' final report.

Information measured by scale B is also necessary for success on scale A.

Reports were assessed according to a third measure, which would appear, on the face of it, to be concerned with quite different skills from those measured by Scales A and B. Reports were given a score out of nine (see scale C) according simply to their effectiveness as reports, without reference to the information appearing in them. Four points maximum were awarded for the coherence of each report, taking into account logical presentation and use of sources as exemplification. A maximum of 4 points were given for appropriacy of register and clarity of linguistic presentation. One bonus point was awarded for readability. Perhaps surprisingly, success or failure on this largely L1 skill is just as closely related to each of the previous two scales as scales A and B are related to each other. Five of the highest scores on this scale C (2,4,5,9,11) were the highest scorers on each of the other two scales; only one high scorer on scale C (15) was *not* one of the highest in scales B.

A fourth scale - Scale D - was concerned with conventional *quality of language* features in the candidates' spoken language. Marks were awarded by a German native speaker listening to a tape recording of each interaction. The sixteen-point scale consisted of four categories of four points each:

(i) accuracy and range of structure
(ii) accuracy of phonology, stress and intonation
(iii) range and accuracy of lexis
(iv) accuracy

Points from zero to four were awarded impressionistically in each category. High scores on this scale do not have a close relationship with scores on the other scales - for example, candidate 17 got a high score on scale D, but low scores on the other three scales, while candidate 4, with the same score on the oral scale was also one of the high scores in other scales.

Spearman-Brown Rank-Difference correlation coefficients were calculated for all of the cross-correlations between the four scales. The results (Fig.2) bear out the observations made during the preceding discussion. Cross-correlations between measures A,B, and C are all very high and very comfortably above the 01 significance level for 19 cases. In striking contrast, cross-correlations between measures D - concerned with surface features of L2 language - and the measures derived from L1 report are very low, and do not approach significance level.

It would appear, then, that conventional oral scales concerned with surface features of language are not adequate predictors of ability to comprehend in oral interactions. What is perhaps surprising is that our results indicate that comprehension skills of the type we were concerned with are closely related to other complex and integrative skills - such as the ability to write a coherent report in the L1.

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FIG 1

	A REP INF		B INT TOP		C REF FEA		D CONV OR SCL	
	Score	RO	Score	RO	Score	RO	Score	RO
1	5	16	4	10	4	15	9	12
2	17	1	7	1	1	2	9	12
3	4	17	2	19	1	19	8	15
4	14	7	1	1	7	2	13	2
5	15	6	7	1	7	2	8	15
6	11	11	4	10	5	10	13	2
7	9	13	4	10	4	15	6	19
8	8	14	3	18	4	15	8	15
9	16	4	7	1	7	2	9	12
10	10	12	4	10	5	10	11	7
11	17	1	7	1	7	2	10	10
12	12	10	4	10	5	10	13	2
13	17	1	7	1	8	1	10	10
14	13	8	4	10	5	10	14	1
15	16	4	5	8	7	2	11	7
16	13	8	5	8	6	3	13	2
17	5	16	4	10	5	10	13	2
18	6	15	4	10	4	15	8	15
19	13	8	7	1	6	3	11	7
MAX	20		7		9		16	

Score and Rank order data on four assessement scales

RO Rank Order
A REF INF Report Information
B INT TOP : Interview Topic Recovery
C REF FEA : Report Writing Features
D CONV OR SCL : Conventional Oral Accuracy and Fluency Scales

FIG 2

	A	B	C
B	.875*		
C	.937*	.933*	
D	.181	.176	.269

N = 19
.665 = Sig. .01

A	Report Information
B	Interview Topic Recovery
C	Report Writing Features
D	Conventional Oral Accuracy and Fluency Scales

COMMENTS IN ACADEMIC ARTICLES

John Skelton
Aston University Language Studies Unit

Introduction

The notion of *hedging*, as it is often called, has been around since the early 1970's. The term was first used by George Lakoff (1972), who spoke of "words whose job it is to make things fuzzy or less fuzzy". What he had in mind is the way in which we can express the extent to which we commit ourselves to particular propositions by, for instance, adding caveats like *I think*, or *sort of*, or *maybe*, or *it is said* to signal distance: or underlining our support or enthusiasm with a phrase like *there is no doubt*, *I'm sure*, *it is certain that* and so on. Though scarcely touched on in ELT, the concept has been interestingly discussed by Prince et al (1982) who look at physician-physician discourse; and Rounds (nd), who deals with what she calls "precision and flexibility" in academic discourse. Implicit in Rounds - and this is a point rather overlooked by Prince et al - is the idea of hedging as a resource rather than a failing, as a tool for making thought subtle rather than fudged. The term "hedging" itself has unfortunately pejorative connotations in ordinary language, and for this among other reasons I prefer to draw a distinction between *propositions* and the *comments* people make on them.

In general, however, there has been little discussion of commentative language, and fewer attempts to apply what is known, although it seems obvious that an understanding of the distinction between what people say and what they say about what they say is at the root of choice and subtlety in language.

In what follows I explore some of the issues involved through an analysis of academic prose, since it is intuitively in such highly self-conscious and self-monitoring text that the major dichotomy between the propositions one sets forth and the expressions of one's views on them are most obvious and their successful and delicate deployment most necessary.

The Corpus

The corpus from which I have worked consists of 20 journal articles published since 1980 in *hard* science disciplines, and a further 20 from Humanities disciplines. The journals were chosen by consultation with specialist informants in each field, who were asked to nominate the leading academic journals of their discipline. Thereafter articles were chosen at random, except that review articles were excluded. Large chunks of such texts are, obviously enough, introduced by phrases of the type "Smith argues that...", which distances the author from the proposition that follows (which is Smith's argument, not his), but does so in a way which is frequently simply a report, and which is therefore not a comment as I wish to use the term.

Intuitively, commentative language will be associated with hypotheses, probabilities and evaluation rather than certainties or descriptions. Therefore one would expect commentative language to occur in different ways in articles from very different disciplines, and broadly speaking this is what my data bear out.

One's preconception of the Science article is perhaps that it moves from a brief statement of known certainties to the delineation of an unanswered question to a description of the procedure by which this question can be answered to, finally, a statement of what new information has now moved into the realms of the known.

On the other hand almost all study in the Humanities draws, to all intents and purposes, on a finite body of knowledge, a finite source of raw data. In the Humanities therefore new information is not typically discovered; scholarship involves, in essence, the re-evaluation of the known. Only one of my 20 Humanities articles have as their function to rehearse and reinterpret the known. One, on Ancient History, describes itself as "a propaedeutic study, its object being to clarify the source picture". (I am grateful for the author's gloss).

From this broad generalisation, one might expect certain sections of the Scientific paper (Discussion, for example) to be more commentative than others (Methods, say). This is what happens, though what is perhaps rather unexpected is the discovery that, at least for my data, discussion-type sections are marginally more commentative than the average Arts paper. But before I move to a quantitative analysis of the data I wish to follow through some theoretical problems.

Types of Comments

Firstly, I have chosen to recognise three main comment-types. Type 2 and Type 3 are briefly discussed below. But I would argue that it is only what I have called Type 1 comments that can be defined, and therefore quantified, with anything approaching certainty, and it is to them, therefore, that I devote most of my discussion, and on which I have based all my data.

TYPE 1 COMMENTS

As an instance of how such comments function, here is a stretch of text on Keats's poetry, shorn of all comment (including an intensifier, "far", which I would count as a Type 2 comment):

> Keats's Ode is "about" the sound of a nightingale. The poem is more complex than such a bald, literal statement implies. It is "about" the power of sound in awakening the imagination.

Compare this with the original, with comments in italics:

> ***It cannot be denied, of course***, that Keats's Ode is about the sound of a nightingale. ***It would be equally impossible to deny that*** the poem is ***far*** more complex than such a bald, literal statement implies. It is, ***more properly***, "about" the power of sound in awakening the imagination.
>
> (H1)

The fact that the second, original version is "better" than the first may serve to reiterate the obvious point, that comments are no bad thing. More interestingly, the doctored version reads haltingly and clumsily in a way that rather suggests it lacks cohesive ties. It seems likely, though it is not my present purpose to examine this, that comments may typically have a cohesive as well as a strictly commentative function. Finally, it will be seen that though some comments, like the first, third and fifth in the above, have the sentence as their domain some, like that "far", any comment only on a phrase, and indeed the phrase commented on may itself be a comment. Such appears to be the function of "of course" in this passage, as it reinforces the inevitability of "It cannot be denied".

The only realisation of a major category of comment represented in the data but not the above quotation is the use of a copula (other than "be") to indicate the tentative. Such comments commonly co-occur with other markers of commentative language, such as a probability indicator, as in the following (to illustrate how common comments are I have made a point of choosing this and the following quotations in this section from the same article, on Geology):

> ***It seems likely*** that in many instances of deformation accompanied by chemical transformations, diffusion of matter in stressed interfaces is an essential part of the deformation process.

I have counted such double comments, with some hesitation, as two separate comments.

The following categories of Type 1 comments occur in the data:

a) **copulas other than "be".** These are used to express an area of uncertainty, or alternatively of possibility - it is sometimes hard to be sure in any particular instance which is intended, nor need we assume that the writer him/herself is always sure.

b) **modal auxiliaries**. These are used to express uncertainty, as in the following:

> The effective film thickness ***may*** also depend on stress, so that overall the stress sensitivity to strain rate ***may*** be complex, and not simply linear as implied by eq 4.

Modal uses for logical deduction are also fairly well represented, and look commentative in function:

> ...it is to be expected that the development of such a microstructure ***will*** be most intense in fine-grained material.
>
> ...it seems likely that most natural pressure solution involves diffusion

> in intergranular aqueous films which ***must*** possess anomalous physical properties in order to account for their existence.

The case is particularly clear here because both modal uses are tied to an earlier comment introduced by an *it is*: indeed, the use of *will* in the first example appears to be grammatically constrained by the impersonal which precedes it, an additional complication in quantifying the data, but one which is rare enough to ignore for present purposes.

c) adjectivals and adverbials introduced by *It is*, *This is*, *There is*, or which are sentence or clause-initial and immediately followed by a comma (see below, for some of the problems with this classification). They function to comment on:

   i) the degree of possibility or certainty of a proposition. This co-occurs with words like *possible*, *certain* and so forth.

   ii) the extent to which the proposition is perceived as significant or interesting. This co-occurs with words like *important*, *interesting* etc. (though for some problems with this sub-category, see below).

   This is reminiscent of Swales on article introductions; though in fact this comment type may appear anywhere in an article.

d) **lexical verbs, often of believing, arguing, doubting etc.**. A difficulty here is the problem of distinguishing whether a particular occurrence of such a verb, in the context where other research is being mentioned, represents a comment on the research, or merely reports it. It is not absolutely clear in this quotation, for example, whether Griggs himself used some such phrase as *I presume*, and the present author is therefore simply reporting someone else's comment on the status of his work: or whether the present author is commenting, for the first time, on the fact that Griggs' work rested on a presumption which he did not acknowledge:

> ...***it was presumed*** by Griggs (1940) that the flow of water-saturated limestone would be through a process of solution at grain impingements.... (S14)

Contrast the more straightforward:

> ...***it is well known that*** pressure solution produces a range of spectacular microstructural manifestations in rocks naturally deformed under diagenetic or low metamorphic grade conditions, e.g. McClay (1977). (S14)

Here, there is no special difficulty in accepting this as a comment with the reference to McClay called in to support it. One more example:

> ***We believe*** a key consideration is the alignment of the electrical field parallel to the axis of the bone. (S10)

TYPE 2 COMMENTS

Type 2 comments are concerned with the way adjectivals and adverbials in general function in academic text. At one end of the scale is the purely objective list of figures (at least, objective on the surface, though they may be tendentiously chosen): these are not comments. At the other end of the scale from such precise calibration is the subjective, imprecise, and therefore in some sense commentative description of such measurements as, say, *big*, or *considerable*, or, as in the following, *strong* and *high*.

> ....a strong relationship was found between physiological recordings and subjective assessment.
>
> Between the same two physiological variables some showed high positive and others high negative correlation.... (S8)

It is obvious that here an evaluation is being made of a proposition: *There was a relationship. It was strong.* In this sense, and in the sense that the language used in such cases is often functionally suasive, this may be best regarded as a comment. To do so, however, would be to permit a bewildering and open-ended set of adjectives (and perhaps all adjectives) to be, always, commentative. There may be a certain amount of truth in this: it is in the nature of adjectives to be judgmental, but to follow this path is to cheapen the notion of the comment beyond value.

On the other hand, it is difficult to find a principled reason for acknowledging some of the following, and rejecting others:

> It is clear there is a difference.
> There is clearly a difference.
> There is a clear difference.
> The difference is clear.

With a great deal of hesitation I have arbitrarily accepted adjectivals and adverbials introduced by *It is*, *This is* or *There is* and those which are sentence or clause initial and followed by a comma. I make no further comment here, except to draw the reader's attention to the perhaps dangerous frequency, in the discussion sections of many scientific articles, of what I have here called *uncalibrated*, evaluative use of adjectives.

TYPE 3 COMMENTS

It is a truism that every use of language is an act of choice, and in this sense therefore every choice is a comment on what is being discussed. From this it follows that there is an association between commentative language and stylistic markedness. This, however, is an area at once so large and so beyond description that it is not worth discussing in this context, however interesting. Two examples from the same article, unusual but not unique:

> A resulting optimism is that empiricists and theoreticians will increasingly

> speak a common language, contribute to each other's enterprise and together move out of the electrophoretic doldrum.
>
> Just as the alchemist yearned for a formula that would turn into gold the modern biologist longs for a conceptual framework that will make any data set coruscate with revelations. The framework described here falls considerably short of such expectations, but then, modern chemistry has not fulfilled the alchemist's most ardent dream. (S10a)

As has frequently been said: science is not the coolly objective discipline it appears to be.

Results

I turn now to the quantification of the data. It will be recalled that the numbers here refer only to a specific type of comment: this excludes a great deal that is evaluative in some sense, and a less substantial amount that involves the evaluation, and therefore some form of comment on, propositions. That is to say that the figures below only scratch the surface of the extent to which academic writing, including scientific writing, involves vagueness (in my sense, *uncalibrated* judgement).

The basic figures are given below:

Table 1

ARTS	
Type 1 Comments per 1000 words	10.74
Type 1 Comments per sentence	0.38
SCIENCES	
Type 1 Comments per 1000 words	11.14
Type 1 Comments per sentence	0.47

The reader is asked to recall that the study of commentative language is not well-developed, and that these figures should therefore be treated with a degree of caution, but the overall picture is unmistakable.

Comments are common in academic writing, and about equally common in Arts and Sciences. Moreover, given that they certainly appear to occur, overall, in between one third and one half of all sentences (and remember that I have excluded a great deal from consideration that is certainly commentative), they are a much more common feature of academic writing than, say, most verb tenses.

The range of frequency is, as one might expect, very considerable. The highest figure I found came from a Philosophy article. The figures here were 38.62 Type 1 Comments per 1000 words, which works out at 1.17 per sentence - given the frequency with which the domain of a comment is the sentence, this is an extraordinary figure. A brief extract of the discussion on the subject "Do Zygotes Become People?" will give the flavour of the article:

> Here it might be said that I am essentially a person. More generally, it may be said that anything that is a person is essentially a person. It follows from this that I cannot exist, and so did not exist, at any time at which I fail to be a person. Granting that "my" organism was not a person eight or nine months before my birth, and granting also that no entity that was a person at this time has any sort of plausible claim to being me, it seems that I did not exist eight or nine months before my birth. (A19)

The lowest figure was from the field of Organic Chemistry and entitled "The Structure of Antibiotic A41030A". This gave a total per 1000 words of 5.15, and per sentence of 0.14. One might guess from the title that this is a purely descriptive piece, concerned only with certainty, and in fact - as we shall see, unsurprisingly - the only comments come in the concluding sections.

It is typical of articles in the Sciences that they are broken down into clearly labelled sections. However, the names of these labels and to a lesser extent their functions vary from article to article. Only two of the twenty in the corpus followed precisely the traditional "IMRAD" pattern of Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, though this general sequence, however labelled, and with or without deviations, could be discerned in the majority. Thus, the article just mentioned has the following sections:

Introduction (which is not labelled)
Experimental Section
Results and Discussion (comprising 2/3 of the total article)
Conclusion

-and this degree of variation is not unusual.

Nevertheless, it has proved possible with the Science articles to identify three major sections, which I shall call simply beginning, middle and end. The beginning is either not labelled at all, or is called the Introduction. Its purpose, very broadly, is to place the present research in an academic context, and to justify it. This corresponds well with other findings in this area, eg Swales 1984 and Crookes 1985. The middle section may be labelled something like Methods, Methods and Results, Calculations, or it may have a label which is idiosyncratic to the article, and if it does, the middle section itself, in the data, always consists of more than one section. The function of this section, which may be either very short or very long, is to describe a particular experimental procedure, or a range of procedures; sometimes this may involve a degree of speculation more typical of the traditional Discussion section. The end section is variously labelled Discussion, Conclusion, or Results and Discussion. In one example, from the *American Mineralogist*, it is labelled Summary, and does indeed have this function, but in all other cases the closing section is discursive, speculative and, in our sense, vague.

In the Arts, however, it is impossible to perceive any overall rhetorical shape in the division into sections. Either the article is not divided at all, or it is divided into sections which are numbered rather than labelled, or it is divided into sections which are labelled idiosyncratically. A single article has a Conclusion, but this in effect is a summary of the article as a whole and, interestingly, asserts - without comment - the arguments that have been more tentatively presented in what has gone before. This is, in other words, the least speculative part of the article. I quote the beginning:

> The style of this passage reflects not just the inert turgidity of which Seneca is often accused, but a set of compositional principles by which he radically transforms his sources. He does not aim at the linear clarity of classical narration, but at a sharp and rapid counterpoint of strikingly individual and sometimes overlapping details.... (A11)

There is, in other words, no part of an Arts article which one can more certainly identify with commentative language than any other. Comments are equally likely to occur on the first page as the last.

With Science articles, however, one can be much more definite about things. A breakdown gives the following:

Table 2

Science Articles: Type1 Comments per 1000 words.

Beginning Section	9.70
Middle Section	4.39
End Section	19.33

That is, the beginning of a Scientific article is likely to be almost as tentative as an Arts article, while the end is likely to be a great deal more so. The middle section is not likely to be tentative, and indeed where this section is labelled Methods, or even Results, the amount of commentative language will be very much smaller than is indicated here, or may simply not exist.

The function of the comments in the beginning and ending sections is, however, very different. In beginnings, firstly, there are many examples of verbs often associated with hedging, such as verbs of arguing, saying and reporting, which are used to report on the previous research of others. These are included in the present data. Secondly, comments used to suggest tentativeness do so to raise questions which the article in question is to answer. These comments, in other words, imply the promise (often made explicit in a Swalesian Move 4), that what is now uncertain will be made certain:

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> There are two different, but possibly reconcilable views of the alginate structure. (S14)
>
> The electron gas approach....appears to offer strong promise. (S20)

In endings, however, the function of the comment is to speculate once more about the unknown, but an unknown which has, thanks to the article, had its boundaries changed. The form however is likely to be indistinguishable:

> The addition of the bulky chlorine to ring E appears not to be detrimental to antibiotic activity. (S11)

- with the exception, that is, of explicit markers of Conclusions such as:

> We conclude, then, that for the MEG procedure to be useful for modelling many silicates or for predicting mineral structures, the theory must include treatments of anisotropic polarization.... (S20)

The most common comments were as follows:

Table 3

Arts	
it seems that, seems	11.49%
might, might have	8.04%
may, may have	6.90%
apparently, it appears that, it appears + Inf	5.75%
Sciences	
it is possible that, possibly	15.38%
it appears that, it appears + Inf	8.33%
may	7.70%
it is interesting/important that, interestingly	11.54%

With the exception of the occurrence of expressions of interest and importance in Science articles, these figures look sufficiently like each other to be unremarkable, and the corpus is sufficiently small to make them no more than a guideline. The only real pointer of interest here is what is implied by the fact that the most common comments in the Sciences make up a rather higher percentage of all comments than in the Arts. There appears to be much greater latitude available to writers in the Arts as to how they comment on what they say. In all, there are 61 comments attested in Arts articles but not in the Science articles, and only 11 attested in the Science articles but not in the Arts. This latitude has no doubt something to do with an unconscious convention in the Arts that good style may be related to originality, and the contrary convention in operation in the Sciences, that good style and modest, objective anonymity go hand in hand. Thus, in a single Arts article, we have the following, all of which are unique to this paper:

> *I would see this as* fresh Chian diplomacy.
> *this is even truer now* that we have Chester Starr's masterly study.
> *I fancy* that he would have included the earliest standardised tetradrachms.

And the closing sentence is, as the author's personality intervenes with a flourish:

> If they show the Thasian standard, I shall naturally be happy - but *not surprised.* (A13)

Conclusion

One general remark about the function of comments in academic text is that they exist to express the complex interweaving of three types of certainty that exist in scientific enquiry. One is the certainty of the world the article takes for granted, those things assumed to be common ground and beyond fruitful discussion. When this certainty is called into question it is associated with a comment either to express doubt (*It may be doubted if...*), or to throw responsibility onto someone else, named or anonymous (*It has been suggested that....*). Or, if a comment is made at all, it may be simply to reinforce the unchallengeable status of the proposition (*It is well known that...*).

Another is the uncertainty of the purely hypothetical. This is most typical of the exploratory Discussion section of scientific articles, though it is strongly associated also with the hypothesis-making of opening sections in the sciences where the unknown and poorly understood are delineated.

A third is the certainty of logical deduction; as opposed to the *a priori* certainty of the first type, this is the *a posteriori* certainty of the smaller world of the article, and typically of the findings of an experiment it contains. This one might expect to be associated with the logical deduction of *must have* or *cannot have*, or with performatives of conclusion such as *we conclude*: but this is rare, though an example has been given above. In fact it is often hard to distinguish when this *a posteriori* certainty shades into hypotheticality, the assumed diffidence of the author who wishes to downgrade his/her own conclusions to mere hypothesis.

The reasons for studying comments should need little rehearsing. In a way that is perhaps beyond directly research, the way in which people use language to talk about what they say lies at the heart of choice in language, and guarantees our ability to use language with subtlety, to mean precisely and with discrimination.

As far as the language classroom is concerned, the ability to use the commentative system of a language enables the learner, at every level, to use his/her limited linguistic resources to achieve greater delicacy of meaning. The switch away from the text sentences (which tended to be propositional in my sense) of the grammatical syllabus has been liberating to some extend, but the emphasis, particularly within EAP, on cohesion - the logical relationship of propositions - obscures the status of the propositions themselves: and information about this status is carried by the commentative system.

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